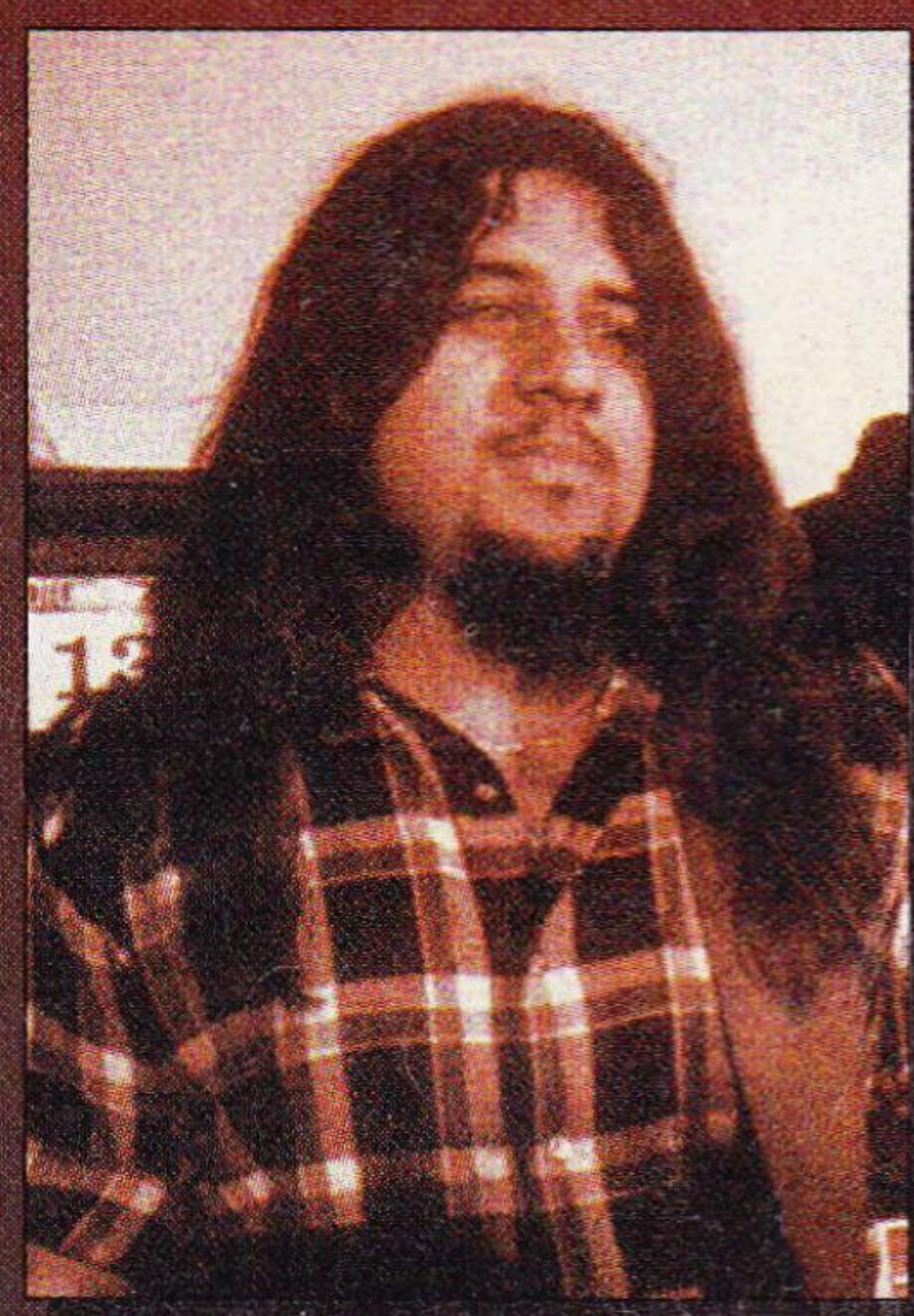
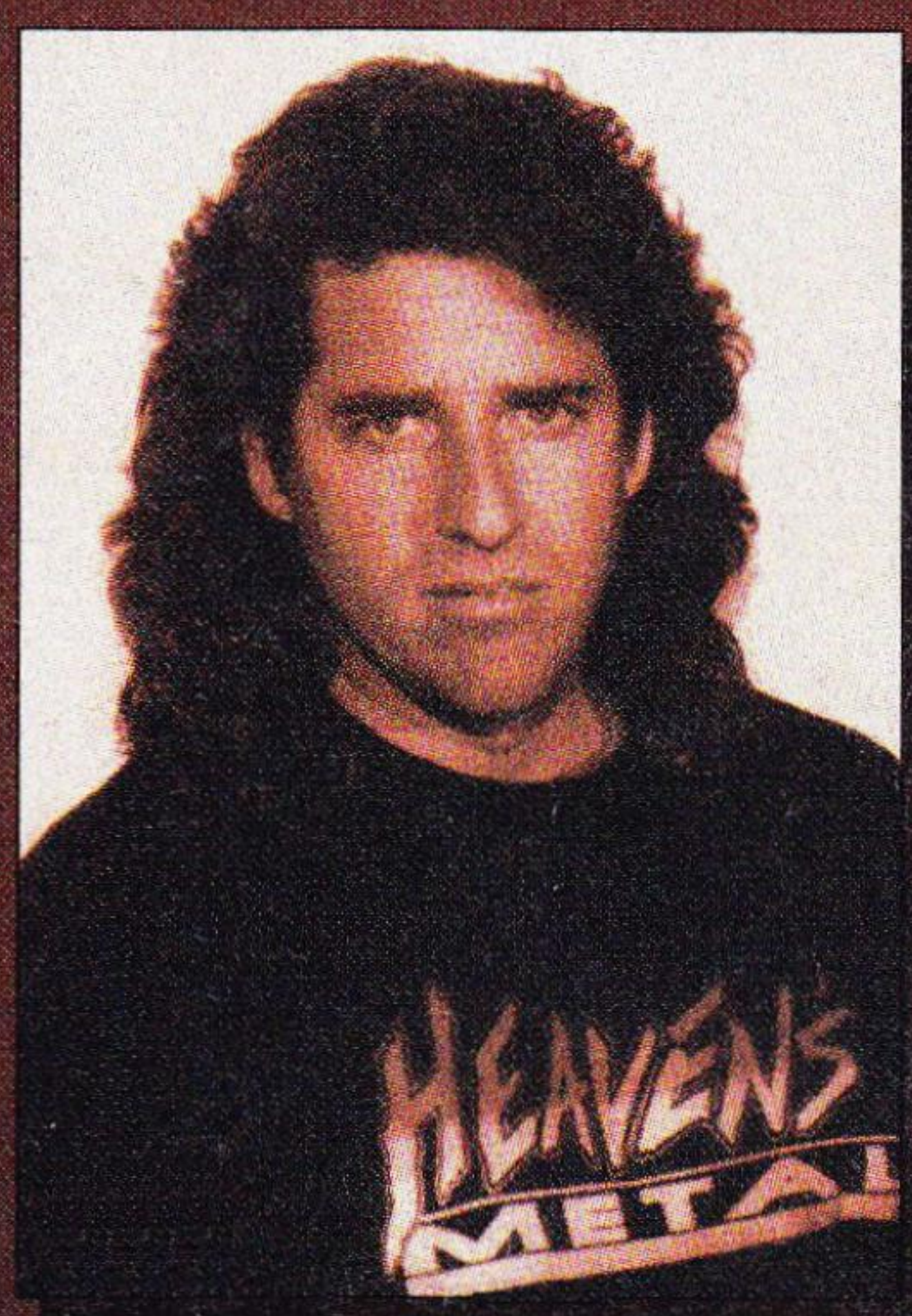


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TOURNIQUET

ALSO: MORTAL, THE KRY, COLLISION, WHITECROSS

KING JAMES, THE CRUCIFIED, ATOMIC OPERA, PARAMAECIUM

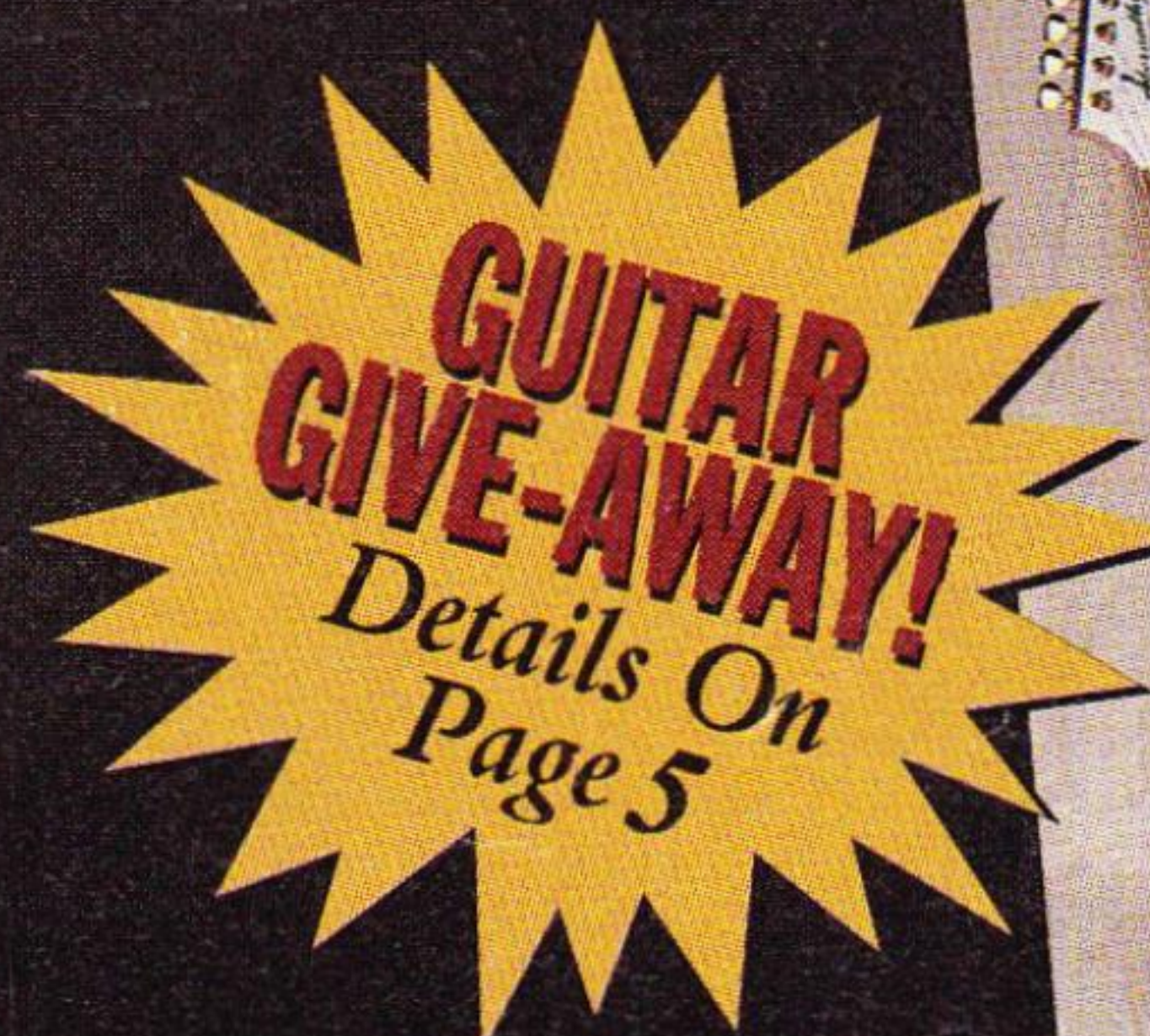
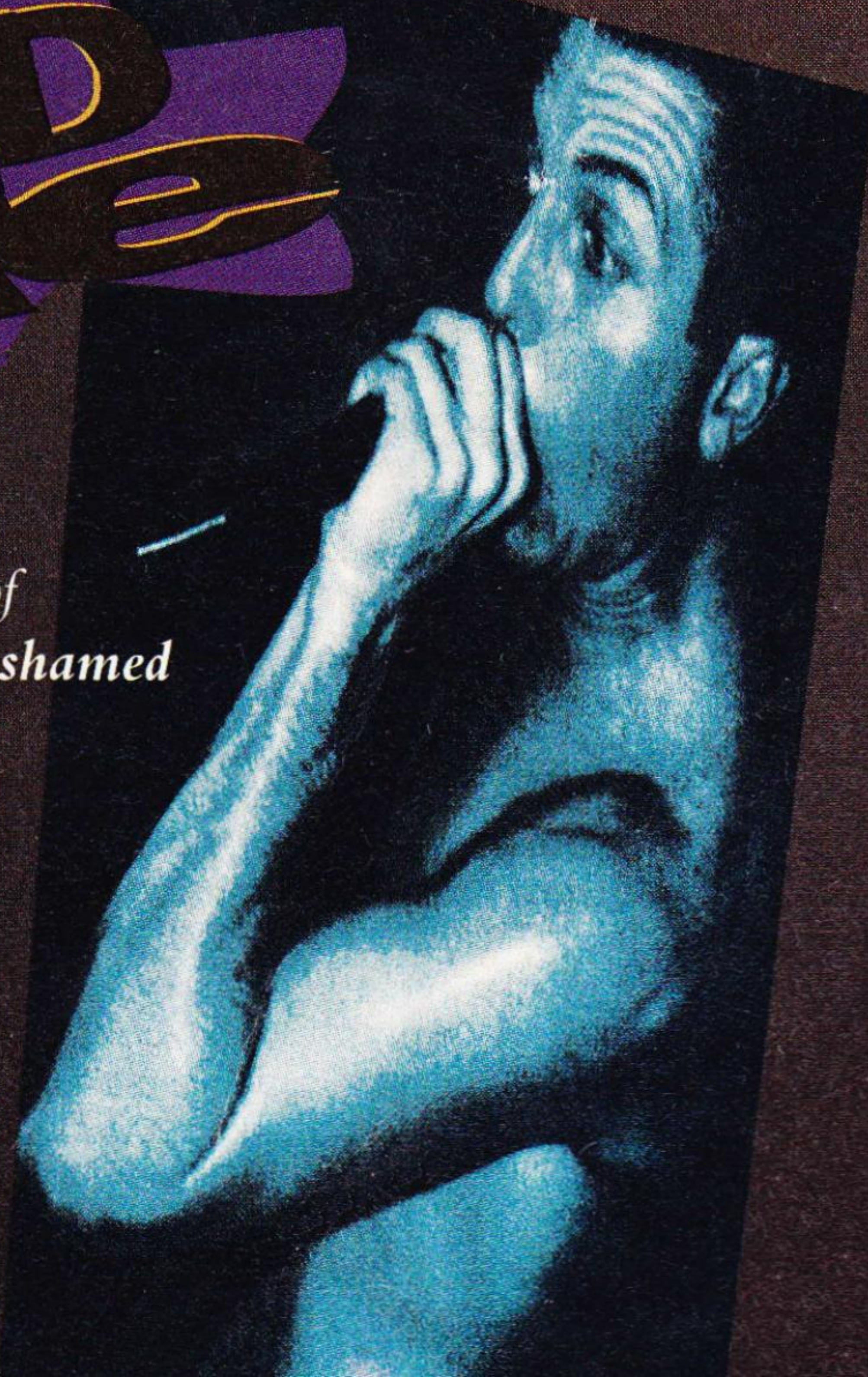
UNDER MIDNIGHT, A LOOK AT THE BLUES, CORNERSTONE '94 REVIEW

LABEL PROFILE: TOOTH & NAIL, THE NORTHWEST MUSIC SCENE

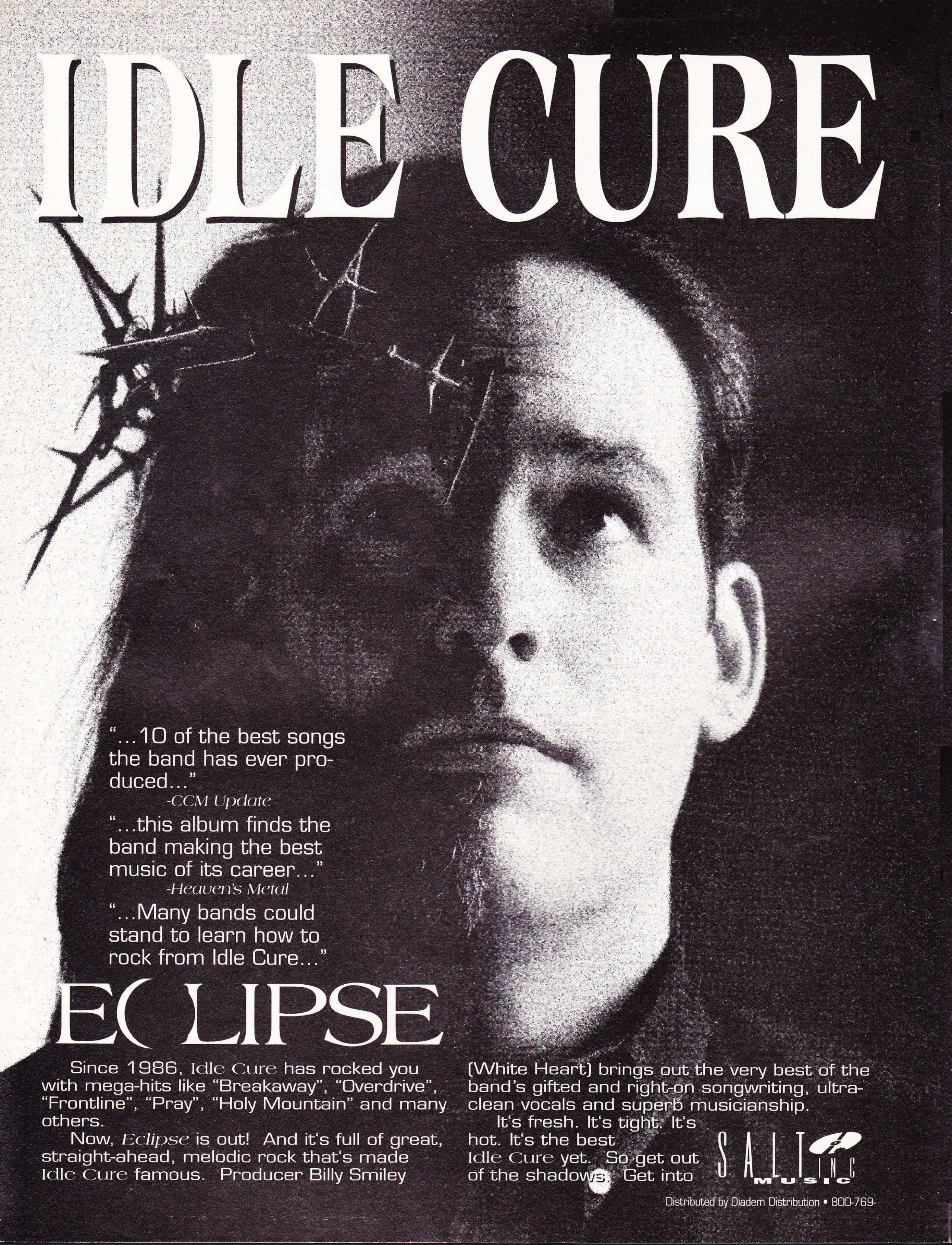
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ECLIPSE

Since 1986, Idle Cure has rocked you with mega-hits like "Breakaway", "Overdrive", "Frontline", "Pray", "Holy Mountain" and many others.

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6 LETTERS TO ED

8 TOURNIQUET

Silently vanishing & then reappearing, Tourniquet has hit the touring trail with a new album, *Vanishing Lessons*, and a new guitarist -- Aaron Trotter -- in tow.

14 THE KRY

With its second release, *You*, on the new Freedom label, The Kry is out making new friends. Jerry Wilson is one of the many new friends.

17 WHITECROSS

Writer Dave Muttillio finds out what a Rex-less life is like for Whitecross founder Scott Wenzel and Co.

18 KING JAMES

When Rex Carroll parted ways with Scott Wenzel, he quickly recruited a singer in Jimi Bennett. To record the album, he called upon the help of ex-Stryper veterans Robert Sweet & Tim Gaines. Pastor Dave Hart tries to find out if this is a permanent line-up and gets introduced to the new album.

20 THE CRUCIFIED

With the CD re-release of *Nailed & Take Up Your Cross* and the self-titled debut, we thought it appropriate to send Andy Crump to find out what these four guys who helped make a difference in Christian metal are up to.

22 PARAMAECIUM

This Australian trio has added a new twist to death metal on its debut album. Find out what makes 'em tick in this fax-transmission interview.

24 UNDER MIDNIGHT

Last time writer Dan MacIntosh interviewed Under Midnight, the artists spoke through a voice machine. This time Frankie lets down his hair and takes an honest look at the future.

26 ATOMIC OPERA

Find out what the latest Wilde Silas band has to say about art and their debut album -- *For Madmen Only*.

30 LABEL PROFILE: TOOTH & NAIL

David Jenison finds out why this guy named Brandon Ebel is signing tons of good hardcore bands.

32 MORTAL

A few tears were shed when writer Randy Rocker got together with Jyro and Jerome to talk about the end of a wonderful band called Mortal.

34 NORTHERN EXPOSURE

Trevor McPherson gives us the lowdown on what's happening in the Northwest music/ministry scene.

36 HARDCORE

Only our writer David Jenison could boil down the hardcore movement so eloquently with guests Mark Salomon, Tim Mann, Myk, and Brandon Ebel.



40 THE BLUES

(Photo by Jim Cagle)

Hard rock and heavy metal wouldn't be here today without the blues. Dan MacIntosh talks with four guys who are embracing this honest and hardworking genre called the blues.

46 COLLISION

This issue our "What So & So Sez" column catches up with this heavy-duty outfit on Chaos/Columbia Records.

53 CORNERSTONE '94

Did you miss the fest of the year? Find out what happened here.

57 METAL TRACKS

News, news, news!

63 CONCERT REVIEWS

Get a sneak peak at the Michael Sweet tour, plus catch Dig Hay Zoose and Hot Pink Turtle in Minnesota and Precious Death in Northern California.

REGULAR ELEMENTS:

64 ALBUM REVIEWS

79 TOUR DATES

79 RADIO CHARTS

80 TRADING POST

82 ASK WENDI

86 THE CHRISTIAN AND ART *

90 LICKS & TRICKS

94 PASTOR BOB

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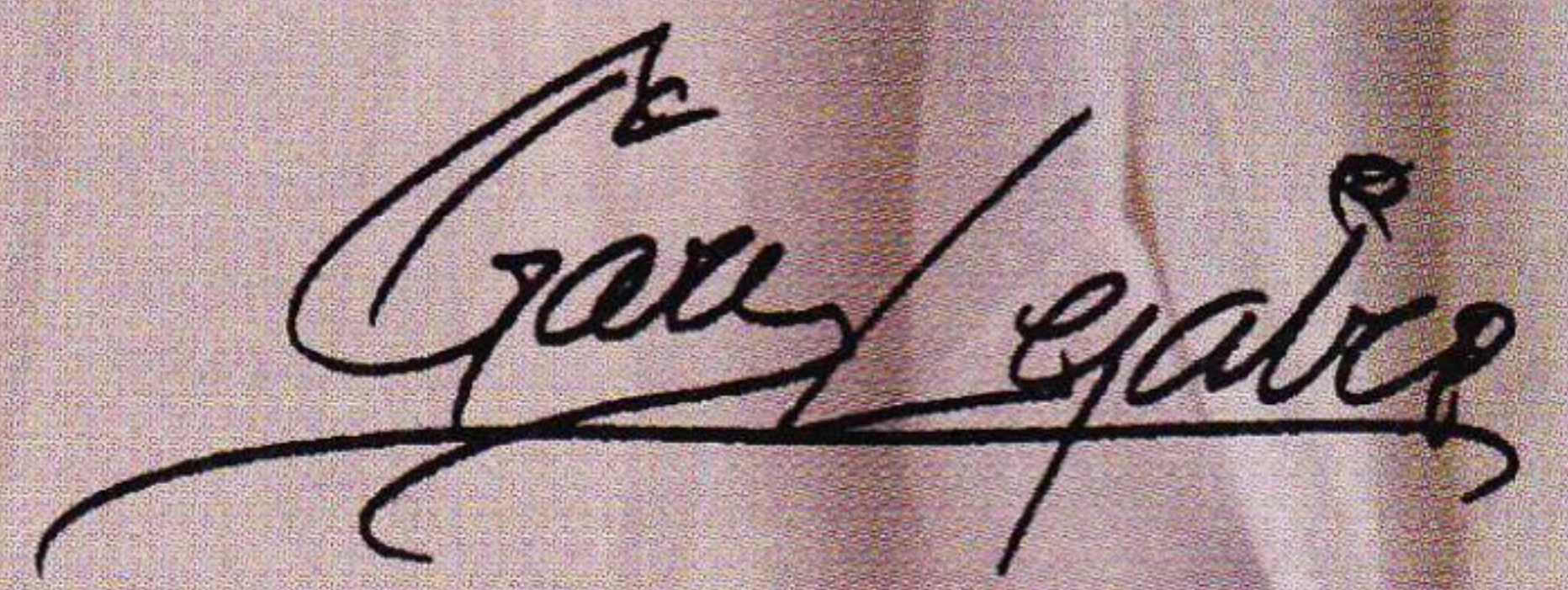
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Scripture

"I tell you the truth," He continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown. I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed -- only Naaman the Syrian." (Luke 4:24-27)

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COOL COLUMNS!

I just bought my first issue of your magazine at a local Christian bookstore. I really love this mag! It's a slammin', jammin', lickin', kickin', riffin', rippin', etc...it's basically killer! I especially enjoy Kemper B. Crabb II's column, "The Christian And Art" and Wendi's column, "Ask Wendi," along with Pastor Bob's column. These don't just add variety, but they also prove that we Christian metal fans are not just a bunch of "metal heads" with the word "Christian" tacked on. We have brains and spirituality, just like any other Christian.

--Kristina Futrell
Marietta, South Carolina

COLUMN CUDOS

Praise God for your magazine and thank you for your commitment to keeping HM ultimately focused on Christ and the Word. I couldn't agree more with Kemper Crabb's most recent article emphasizing the importance of knowing the Bible, for it is by the Word that we are sanctified (John 17:17). If our minds are not being "renewed" by the reading, understanding, memorizing and applying of the Scriptures (Romans 12:1-2), then our minds will remain dark and we will think and act as the world teaches. Subsequently, not one of us, regardless of the stature or skill we obtain in any profession, will have an impact for Christ.

Keep up the "Ask Wendi" and "Pastor Bob" columns, as well as the Gospel tracts on the back cover, as those pieces consistently point us back to humility, prayer, our sinful nature and the importance of cultivating our personal relationship with Christ. In fact, I think it is those sections of the magazine which most distinguish HM from a secular magazine, and I am thankful that you have not eliminated those sections in order to appeal to a secular audience.

Finally, thanks for the awesome reviews! I bought my last three CD's based on your reviews alone! (Saviour Machine, Veni Domine and Detritus) ...and I could not be more pleased. By the way, you are right, Veni Domine totally shreds!! That style of metal cannot be replaced.

--JT Swank
San Antonio, Texas

NOT TOO PERFECT

I just wanted to write and let you know how much I appreciate you! I'm not a big metal

fan (Petra and Idle Cure are about as far as I've gotten), but your magazine has got to be my favorite music publication. Your whole attitude is impressive and refreshing, and your articles and interviews are a joy to read.

How you manage to put out such a good, quality publication without it seeming "glitzy" or making the artists seem "too perfect," I don't know. Please, just keep doing it!

--Meredith Falk
Candler, North Carolina

HEAVY METAL'S TURN

Let me just start out by saying that I absolutely love Heaven's Metal. I have been a subscriber ever since the third or fourth issue many moons ago. It is simply the best Christian music publication out there. And I pray that God would continue to bless your efforts for many years to come.

Now to the matter at hand. I was a little depressed by things I read in the last couple issues (#45 & 46). Your article on "The State of Christian Metal" really got me thinking. I play in a band myself here locally, and the last year has been really tough; but we are still plugging away. Quotes I read in the article made me wonder if our band has had its day. I don't want to force something to happen that does not have God's hand on it, but, if this is just a test or an attack, I want us to come through it strengthened and ready to go! I just think all of the readers out there that play in bands need to ask themselves these same questions. Be willing to set aside the metal, and seek the Lord big time. And I know that is a difficult thing for me. I know I will find myself reading that article several times. It really challenged me.

The other thing that depresses me is the turn that heavy metal seems to have taken. I have been listening to metal since I was in third grade. I am 25 years old now. What scares me is that I see real heavy metal dying off. I am not against grunge or industrial, but to me it is not metal. Metal is about guitarists that scream; singers who can wail; and drums that knock you into next week! Bands like Haven (massively underrated), Veni Domine, Sacred Warrior, Barren Cross...that's metal! Keyboards and sampling are not. I know that maybe I am old fashioned, and refusing to change with the times, but those bands still sound great today. I just urge those of you who still like real metal to help keep it alive. Go listen to "Dying Day" by Barren Cross again and see if that doesn't still bang your head. I am sorry if I offended any

grunge or industrial fans. This is just one old metalhead's opinion. I just hope Heaven's Metal stays a metal magazine.

Keep up the excellent work, Doug.

--Wade "Metal" Helm
Pekin, Illinois

TAKE THAT HELMET HAT OFF!

First of all, I am a teenager. While looking at one of your recent issues, I became a little upset. Here's my problem: One of the guys in a group you featured was wearing a "Helmet" hat, which I know is not a Christian group. And also, in your Rock & Roll Survey, question #7 (My musical preference is) you list the non-Christian groups, Megadeth, Pearl Jam, Guns 'n' Roses, etc. I don't understand why a Christian mag needs to bring attention to worldly music -- the music that will send a lot of America's youth to hell. Don't get me wrong, I absolutely love the idea of a mag for Christian heavy metal, but you must keep your focus on Christ.

Your sister in the Lord,
--Melissa

(Ed--Thanks for writing and asking, Melissa. I can't answer for the guy in Focused who wore a Helmet hat. The general idea, I guess, is that he wanted to show Helmet fans that they should check out the music of Focused. The reason I listed both a Christian band and a mainstream band next to each category in the survey was so that someone who isn't familiar with Christian music could read the magazine and understand what category to fill out. We at HM not only want to build up the Believer fan, but we want to help save the Helmet fan from Hell.)

SATANIC FLYERS!?

I like your mag a lot! It's way cool. The only complaint I have is on some of your advertisements and articles you have things I don't understand. Like, for example, in Issue #48 on page 15 you have a nude dude in a telephone booth. And, in the same issue, why did you show the

satanic flyer? It doesn't bother me, but it bothers my mom.

Don't get me wrong. I like your mag a lot. Some of your articles have led me closer to God.

--Aaron Blair

North Bend, Washington

(Ed--Hey dude! As far as the Six Feet Deep ad, I look at it as a piece of art. That may not be a "spiritual" answer, but when I go to the art museum, I expect to see some nude statues and paintings. If this ad would've been more graphic, I would've refused to run it. As far as the threatening satanic flyer, I wanted people to see the reality of the opposition out there. If you notice, to the left of the flyer I printed, "The power in the blood of Jesus can save the world!" I, too, was concerned about printing that hateful flyer that gave praise to the punk devil. I printed the truth about Who was much more powerful right next to it to put the flyer in its place, so to speak.)

...JUST TO MAKE IT TODAY

I was at Cornerstone and got my subscription to Heaven's Metal. I got my first issue and, whoa! was it great. But something else hit me as I was reading the article on Mortification. These Godly men minister to us and provide an alternative to satanic secular bands. Do we pray for them? The bands are in the trenches of warfare. They are attacked and they need people to pray, intercede, and stand in the gap for those who minister through music. I saw Mortification at Cornerstone and they told us what they were up against and then I saw that flyer. What can I say, but, "Pray, pray, pray!"

--Chris Coulter
Lincoln, Nebraska

BANDS THAT TALK

First of all, I want to tell you that I love Heaven's Metal -- especially the feature on the back cover. It always speaks to my heart. And I want to thank you and all the bands out there who take the time to

talk to their fans.) The example you guys set is a great influence in the lives of a lot of people. Yes, the music reaches us, but sometimes it's not enough. Knowing that you are there before or after a show if we need to talk to someone makes all the difference in the world. Bands like The Brave, Bride, Guardian, and Michael Sweet have made a huge impact on my walk with Christ and provided encouragement and support when needed. Again, thank you and may God continue to bless your ministries. I love you all!

--Sheina Kalinchak

Midlothian, Virginia

FIGHTIN' WORDS!

Dear Heaven's Metal? Why the question mark, you ask? When I pick up a Christian mag, I expect to see Christian artists. Funny how I notice an article on Fight, who hosts an artist who was once a Judas Priest member. This new group, Fight, is no different than Judas Priest in morals. Both groups are serving Satan, not God. Of course, I do have proof to back this up. My friend, a Christian, went to a Fight concert. He was amazed to see the bassist wearing 666 on the front of his jacket. Not to mention the use of profanity on shirts and in voice. If you are going to do stories on satanic groups, then I guess I will go back to CCM Magazine.

Towne Cryer? "Dark metal for dark times." What is this? We don't need any more dark metal. Jesus is the Light. I think you should be focusing on positive music. By the way, nice article on Sweet. He is fantastic. He and Petra are real examples of good Christian music.

--Matt Davis

(Ed--I get the impression that you didn't read the article "What Fight Sez." What this regular feature does is interviews someone from a "secular" band and asks them what they think about Jesus. It becomes a witnessing situation that you can listen in on, as well as an opportunity for the writer to really share Jesus and His awesome grace.)

YOUNG GEEZERS By Jeff Swenson



ON THE ROAD WITH TOURNIQUET

HOME SWEET MOTORHOME

Like the traveling magician Harry Houdini, Tourniquet packed their goods and hit the performance circuit this past summer, wowing and entertaining audiences all across the United States. Unlike Houdini, however, these entertainers are more than happy to be accessible to their audience and reveal their "secrets" to those who ask.



We caught up with Tourniquet around a pool table in Minneapolis, where these fun-loving young men turn into sharks. Try as I may, I couldn't convince 'em to let me win a single match.

Maybe it was the fact that I suggested that the new album, *Vanishing Lessons* was a little less progressive than the previous three.

"I think that a few things musically changed," explains drummer Ted Kirkpatrick. "Number one is: there's more groove on the new album. I think vocally what we have here is the vocals, I think, really shine on this album -- thanks to Luke Easter."

"Not that they didn't on the other albums," interjects Luke.

"I think that there's also the technical side of it," continues Ted. "People know right away that it's Tourniquet. There's a lot of guitar harmonies."

"I think for anybody who's been into Tourniquet in the past can tell right away that it's still Tourniquet," adds guitarist Gary Lenaire. "I think that we branched out a little bit in a few different directions. Musically, there's styles that Ted, myself, Luke and Victor all like, which are in the rock and roll genre, but not necessarily grind or thrash metal. We like lots of stuff, and I think you'll find a lot of influences on this album."

"I think when people talk about what is heavy," adds Ted, "I think people need to realize (that) just because you yell into a microphone doesn't make your music heavy; or just because your beats are 120 miles an hour speed metal, that doesn't make you heavy either. I think it's more in the groove and it's in the sounds that are coming out of the guitars and the drums and all that. It's in the whole attitude of the song. I think that the progression is stronger than any of the other albums."

"You can sing a ballad and make it heavy if you sing it right," interjects Luke.

"Well," continues Ted, "if you wanna talk about progressive or technical, listen to that harpsichord thing -- the Scarlotti Harpsichord Sonata -- it's so far beyond anything on the other albums. We still have the classical influence and we still try to do original things that have not been done before. To my knowledge, anything like that has never been done. We even had to speed the tape up to get it to the right tempo. It wasn't fast enough on the original recording."

"Show off!" yells Gary.

"For example," adds Ted, "the medical terminology -- we could've done another album with song titles that a lot of people can't pronounce." (Say "Gelatinous Tubercles of Purulent Ossification" fast three times)

"I don't look back on that and think that it was stupid or ridiculous, because it wasn't like we picked up a medical dictionary and said, 'What is this? That sounds cool. I wonder what it means?' I have a background in medical equipment sales. It was all stuff I already knew, and I just wrote songs in an allegorical manner.

"I think there was definitely a conscious effort to say, 'Let's have song titles that people can pronounce. Let's not frustrate the deejays, that are trying to push our album, this time.' Plus a lot of the kids would come up to us after shows and say, 'I love your music, but, to be honest, with some of your lyrics I don't know what you're talking about.' Obviously, it was never meant to confuse people, so you get to a certain point where you go as far as you wanna go in one direction and you take another direction."

"What's really cool is that live we have the opportunity to play a lot of the old catalog," adds Gary. "So, with one record, how many songs can we play off the new record? I would say we play 65% of old material anyway. Songs like 'Pathogenic...', 'Ark of Suffering', 'Test For Leprosy' -- those songs are going to get a lot of time on stage for us. So, if people are into the older stuff,

hopefully they're not going to be let down live. If people are more into the new stuff, they'll be able to hear that live as well.

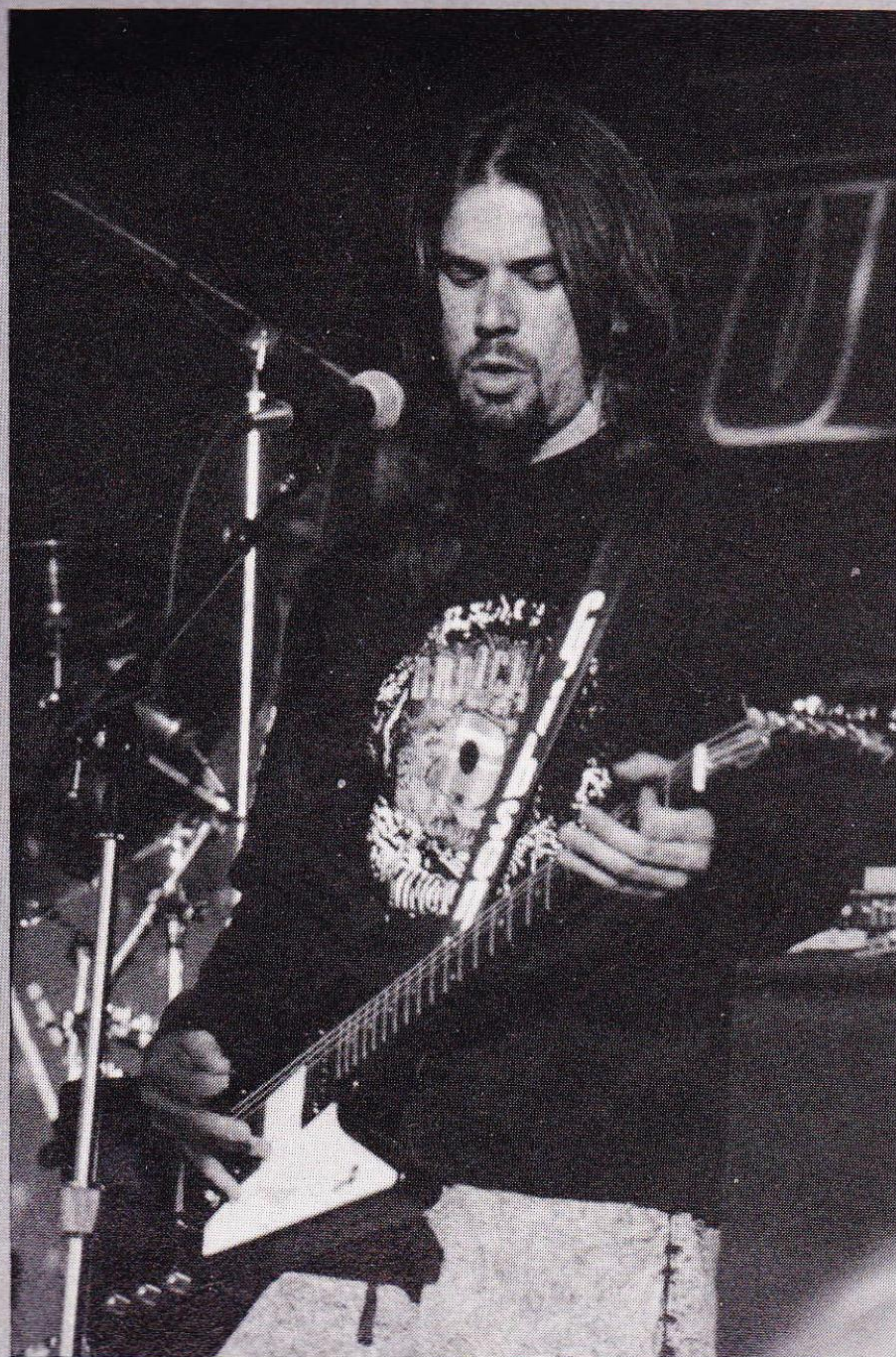
"I know that Ted and I both felt that we could go different distances with a different singer -- whereas Guy was more fitting for what those records were. I think Guy fit that particular time in our lives perfectly and hopefully God's timing is right with Luke."

"Some of it has to do with the music that we like, too," says Ted. "I don't just sit there and listen to progressive thrash all the time. Obviously, I love classical, but I love Dixieland, and some old Southern Rock. There's a song called 'Pecking Order,' which has this break right in the middle like an old Lynyrd Skynyrd song or something. There's things like that are thrown in that are totally out of place. There's way more different guitar sounds on this album than we've ever had on any album. I think a song like 'Twilight,' which talks about the neglect of the elderly is a really serious topic, and I think the music fits the song for that."

"I think that our producer had a big influence on us as well," explains Gary. "This was the first time that a producer actually came in and co-arranged our music. We had someone working with us months in advance on pre-production. I think that kind of came off in the studio. I think we were way more prepared to do this record. We actually spent four months on the record, you know, three months in pre-production and a month and a half recording."

GARY & LUKE @ C-STONE (Photo © Peter Petretta)





Tourniquet knew that, after three albums, they needed to continue to stretch out. Thus, the decision to venture out with a new producer after three consecutive albums with Bill Metoyer was made.

"It was a little scary for us," admits Gary, "but it just seemed like it was time for us to move on. We'd done three records with Bill. Bill is a fantastic producer. We think he achieved everything we went after on all those records -- and did it with the time and the money that we had to do 'em in.

"Jim (Faraci) knew that we were venturing out into a new producer ground and he made it very comfortable for us doing that. He didn't make it hard for us to make the change to a new producer. In fact, Bill and him are old friends. They go back and they both produced different D.R.I. records. They shared projects on countless stuff. It's kind of a family situation. I think the fact that we are Christians was really cool for Jim in the studio too. I know Jim works with bands that I think often times are difficult for him, because of his faith. He would rather work with people who are not swearing every two minutes, who are not drinking in the studio and not goofing off.

"If you show up late to a session with Jim Faraci, he's gone. He'll take the rest of the day off -- and you pay for it. If

you're not ready for a session, he'll walk out. You come to the studio prepared. He warned us about this. He told us some horror stories from bands that were working on huge budgets and stuff, and they'd show up in the afternoon and stuff and Jim would say, 'Well, okay. If it's not good enough for you, it's not good enough for me. Bye!'"

"He basically gives you one chance to mess up," says Luke. "He kind of warns you and then, after that, you're toast."

"It was good," adds Gary, "because as far as discipline goes, he kept us on a very tight schedule.

"Obviously, every producer has different recording techniques," says Ted, "and they all have different gimmicks that they use, so I think that having a different sounding album was definitely the ticket for us."

"As a guitar player," says Gary, "I've never learned so much about the miking and

the sounds the guitars make as I did working with Jim. He knows so many things that are peculiar to his style of producing that I've picked up and have affected my live guitar."

"And the bass too," adds Ted. "The bass by itself is so distorted you can't believe it. He said, 'Just trust me. Wait 'til we get everything on there. It'll sound great.'"

"Specifically," says bassist Victor Macias, "the bass track on 'Your Take.' If you were to solo that out, it was incredibly distorted, but you can't tell."

"He gets these ideas," laughs Luke, "and he turns into the worst five year old: 'Ooh, ooh! Try this! Try this!!' You think he's completely cracked, until he plays it back. He was inspiring, and he constantly cared about the project, which kept good morale for the band.

"I was scared to death of meeting him, because it was my first record, and Jim had worked with a lot of bands in the past that I used to be really, really into. So, I was kinda scared. He came in and he was super easy to work with. He was almost like the sixth member of Tourniquet at this point. He won't push you any farther than you can go, but he won't take any less than he knows you can give. In addition to being a good producer, he's just a really nice person, and he's a

blast to hang around. It was a very cool working relationship."

Musically, the work that went on in the studio has resulted in a quality album that's up to the high standards that Tourniquet has always set for themselves. Lyrically, they're no slouches either. *Vanishing Lessons* not only talks about Harry Houdini's disappearing act, but tackles issues that people face almost everyday, like the "judging by outward appearances" mentality that's scrutinized in "Pecking Order," or the internal desire and struggle to "split this small town and do something" that's talked about in "Pushin' Broom" (the band's next single and video).

Never a band to mince words, Tourniquet delves into the intriguing "victim mentality" topic on the opening track -- "Bearing Gruesome Cargo." Ted expounds, "'Bearing Gruesome Cargo' talks about how people continue on with their past behaviors because someone treated them poorly in the past or someone abused them as a child. 20 years later they're still basically using that excuse for everything. They're saying, 'You don't know what my childhood was like...I had a really rough childhood, that's why I'm such a jerk today. That's why I'm self-centered...Yeah, I do hit my kid occasionally or 'I do hit my girlfriend' or whatever, 'because my father hit me.'

"It talks about how, at some point, you have to just stop and say, 'My past was a mess. I had some people who gave me a bum rap, but I need to move on and take responsibility for my own actions and move ahead with my life spiritually.' We've seen people do that: Their whole life becomes a crutch for their past injustices. No one's perfect."

"No one can let go of everything in the past," Gary adds. "I don't think the song is saying that at all. 'Bearing Gruesome Cargo' deals with people who flippantly look for excuses to live their life without any kind of responsibility and blame it on others."

"Like this guy in California named Robert Alton Harris," adds Luke. "He killed these two guys, basically, for their cheeseburgers. He blamed it on the fact that his mother drank before he was even born. 'It was all her fault.' He finally got the death penalty after fighting and appealing it for 15 years. I'm sorry, but I don't think he stood before God and said, 'Well, you know, my mother drank before I was born,' and God said, 'Well, okay, I'll let you slide.' That isn't what happens. You stand before God and you've got to answer for what you've done, and you don't get to pass the buck to

anybody. You're responsible for your actions."

"We all live in L.A.," says Ted, "and we see so many disgusting deaths caused by gang members. 'Well, you don't know what it's like to grow up in the hood and this is the way it's gotta be or you just can't make it.' That's not true. There's never an excuse for killing someone...for joining a gang and saying, 'Well, if I don't, I'll get killed; so I have to go out and the entry fee is I've got to do a drive-by shooting.' Well, I'm sorry, that ain't gonna cut it with God. That's what that song is about."

I wonder if we'll ever see Tourniquet on a talk-show someday, elaborating on issues like these. This is a serious band who takes their message and the music seriously. This kind of approach would definitely put the pressure

on a newcomer, as guitarist Aaron Trotter soon found out. "About a year ago," tells Aaron, "when they were looking for a singer, I sent a tape in. I'd been singing about three or four years with another band, and playing guitar, and I mentioned that I had over 10 years experience guitar playing. Gary got back to me and things didn't work out and they found Luke, who's a far better singer than I am."

"A year later they just finished their album, Gary called up and said they needed someone and asked me if I wanted to audition. Of course, I said yes and drove about 500 miles on a Thursday and auditioned...from Stagecoach, Nevada, which is near Reno. The next day, I drove home and, before I even got home, Gary called and left a message. So, that night, Friday night, I called Gary back and he said I got the job. Unfortunately, the next day I had to be back in L.A. for the start of the tour, so I drove another 500 miles back on a Saturday. From there it was just a lot of hard work, learning the songs -- especially the new songs I hadn't heard before."

"Aaron gets better and better every night," states Luke, nine dates into the tour. "I mean, he had two days to learn everything and then go out and play for a show. He did really well the first night and he's just gotten better and better at an exponential rate ever since. Plus, he's super easy to get along with."

"I remembered when he'd sent me vocal tapes and stuff," says Gary. "I remember how dedicated he was to the audition. He was so on top of getting the tapes to us and getting the phone calls. He was very responsible and very polite. He seemed very dedicated to the Lord. I

remember thinking, at that time that we were auditioning guitar players, 'If we could just find a guitar player like Aaron Trotter...someone who's got that attitude.' Then I remembered that Aaron had told me that he played guitar way more years than he'd been singing."

And so the tour began... Gary, Ted, Victor, Luke, Aaron, plus two road techs -- Drew and Ken -- loaded up in a motorhome and hit the road. Even though there's good times on the road watching Three Stooges videos and such, there's got to be some grind to it all...as Tourniquet confesses.

"I think the main issue that has to be considered," answers Victor, "minute by minute when you're stuck in a vehicle with six or seven other people is sensitivity and consideration for other

people. I think everyone has quirks. Everyone has pet peeves, everyone has little things that bug 'em or major things that bug 'em. When you're cooped up in a vehicle with a bunch of people for that much time -- I mean, that vehicle is your house -- people learn to be sensitive to each other. If that's not some thing you know, you're gonna rub a few people wrong right off the bat, but you grow into it.

"You just learn to be considerate to other people's wants, needs, or peeves, or whatever. It's give and take. There's compromises here and there. There's just stuff that gets challenged almost constantly, but it's a really, really cool time to grow as brothers. You go on these long drives and there's plenty of time to talk. Obviously, we're reading the Word together. Obviously, if you're in a band, you should be doing that anyway."

"It's your family for the next bunch of weeks, so you have to learn to get along. It's not like everyone's dog eat dog, but you learn to get along and you just kind of grow together. That's what I get out of it every time we do this. Hopefully, as time goes on, we adjust a little bit easier each time."

"It teaches you a lot about patience," adds Aaron.

"In traveling around, it's important to check out the simple things," says Ted. "I mean, we stop and go into a thrift store and look for hats from feed mills in Kansas. I think the United States is incredibly beautiful. Just driving around, just to get out and see what's there and check out the scenery and not just say, 'Now we're on tour, where's our next show?' but to really take advantage of that time... I mean, people drive across the

country and pay money to do it as a vacation. We get to do it as a band and go stop in different places and make the most out of the opportunity of traveling and seeing things that you're gonna be back home in L.A. and say, 'Gosh, all I did was sit in my hotel room and watch tv or something.' It's important to take advantage of all the cool stuff -- the different people, nature, all that stuff."

Gary laughs about Ted's devotion to the outdoors, telling of how he'll get up at 8 or 9 in the morning while on tour and go hit a park or something. "For example," explains Ted, "we went fishing this morning with my dad at a pond outside of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. We caught some bass. We didn't keep 'em, though. We put 'em back in the water."

"I slept through the fishing experience," admits Luke proudly.

Speaking of fishing, when asked about distribution of *Vanishing Lessons* into the mainstream market (which hasn't been finalized as of yet), the band got very serious. "Tourniquet in the mainstream, non-Christian market is a very important step in being able to minister and do what we do," explains Gary. "This particular tour has shown me personally that...I really think bands that are venturing out into the non-Christian scene right now really need to stand behind the real reason they are in Christian music to begin with. I don't think that, in this day and age, that we need a heck of a lot more bands to be going out and being kind of unsure about their beliefs."

"When they're interviewed and stuff...I've seen a few bands that waffle. They venture out into the secular market, but when they're really put into a corner, they flounder. I think, for Tourniquet, we've never been so sure on how to answer a question. Not that we were unsure before, but I know now, especially in this day and age where we've seen so many Christian bands bite the dust, that we've never been more bold for what we believe in. I don't think we've ever been more desirous for the world to know...not only are people going to find out we're Christians, but we're happy for the fact that they're gonna find out that we're Christians."

"If God doesn't take us to selling millions and billions of records, well then we're going to minister as long as anybody is buying our records. For me, as a person, knowing that I could die tomorrow and see my Maker, I know that this is what we've got to do and we can't be afraid of people being a little upset or a little nervous about the fact that we're Christians."

"We've never been more bold for what we believe in."

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JEAN-LUC (Photo © Peter Petretta)

As every fan of heavy Christian music has learned through personal and often painful experience, there isn't a great deal of support or even understanding for their music in the Christian community at large. Even if one is spared the hoary-headed ranting about "the devil's music," there is the constant complaint about how some softer form of music -- say, the inspirational pop of a Twila Paris -- provides a much better artistic foundation for ministry. The true Christian metal fan knows this isn't true, which is no knock against Ms. Paris and her musical kin. Still, one wishes for an artist that straddles the boundary between metal and inspirational; someone that the fans of Bride and Bill Gaither can meet over and agree that this is good.

Enter The Kry. As evidenced by its new album, *You*, on the Freedom label, The Kry isn't out to make anyone forget Mortification. However, its sound contains enough of a rough edge to give metal fans something to chew on while its penchant for melody and straightforward ministerial lyrics should open the eyes of more than a few "rock 'n' roll is always racket" fuddy-duddies. HM's lone 49ers fan, **Jerry Wilson**, spoke with Jean-Luc Lajole, bassist and lead vocalist for the trio, to learn more about the band's roots and ministerial direction.

Lajole, along with his brother Yves, who plays drums in the band, was

Kryin' Over You

born and raised in Quebec. After tromping through the club circuit, the two decided to move to L.A. and take a crack at rock 'n' roll stardom. Their path ended in Albuquerque, where they accepted Christ through hearing Christian radio, and they started attending Calvary Chapel in Albuquerque, where Pete Nelson was the youth pastor. Eventually, the Lajole's musical gift came to the fore, and, along with Nelson on guitar, started the band a few years ago.

What fuels the band? Lajole comments,

"Simply, there's a Scripture in the third chapter of Matthew that describes the calling God has laid upon our hearts where John the Baptist preached repentance (Matthew 3:2). Before the band started, we knew that the world needed to hear about Jesus. We know that the world needs Jesus, and we need to tell the whole world through this band that Jesus is coming soon and we need to repent. This is our vision, and we want to carry that through for as long as God calls us to."

Lajole states that having been raised in Quebec City, the capitol of a Quebec province that has long threatened to secede from Canada proper and form its own country, has had a far greater impact on his life and present ministry than simply making him a Nordiques fan. "Quebec City is an area that is very much unreached with the Gospel. When we came to the Lord here in the United States, it was something very fresh and new to us. People here have been so overfed with Christian truth that sometimes they become numb to it. We've seen both sides, and it has opened our minds to the needs of both camps -- one society that has heard so much, and the other that hasn't heard at all." Lajole goes on to comment that he hopes to re-record some or all of the band's work in French, the language of choice in Quebec, at a later date -- although no timetable has been set for said efforts.

As noted earlier, The Kry's music is neither full-blown metal nor pop,

nor arena rock. Lajole doesn't dwell on labels that might be given to the band, noting, "We don't try to define our music. Our producer on the new album (John Andrew Schreiner) calls it 'atmospheric rock,' which is as good of a description as any!" So, what is the band attempting to do music-wise? "We're always in prayer that God will give us originality and inspire the songs. We have our influences, but we try not to dwell on that and instead write something that's fresh and comes from God. We keep it to a level where people can relate to it; we don't want to get lost in poetry where people are hearing nice words that don't mean anything."

With ministry being the band's main focus, what are the ministerial needs they are seeing in their travels across the country and occasional foreign jaunts (the band has played in Yugoslavia and Australia)? Lajole explains, "There's a song on the new album entitled, 'You're All I Need,' which seems to be a thermometer of the people who come to our concerts. Like any Christian band, most of the people that come to our concerts are Christians. What we're seeing is that many of the people at our concerts don't have a relationship with Jesus that's to the fullest and they don't understand what the Christian walk should be like. Every time we play, we feel God leading us to encourage people to have a friendship and a relationship with Jesus that is real, not just a religious thing -- 'Oh, I guess I'm a Christian and I guess I'm saved and I guess I'm going to Heaven.'"

So, how does Lajole summarize the band's message? "We want people to know they are saved; to know they are Christians. There is a walk involved with this. You need to experience Jesus. There is the need to read the Bible every day. You need to feed upon the Word and experience the fruits of the Spirit. We try to encourage that life in Christ to the fullest, because there is a lack of that in people's lives. Jesus promises us an abundant life. Instead, there are too many Christians living bumper lives! It's not life to the fullest; it's life to the smallest. We want to encourage people to realize that Jesus is all we need. If we're plugged into the vine, like it says in John 15, we will be bearing fruit. That's one of the main focuses of our ministry, encouraging people to have a relationship with Jesus."

HM

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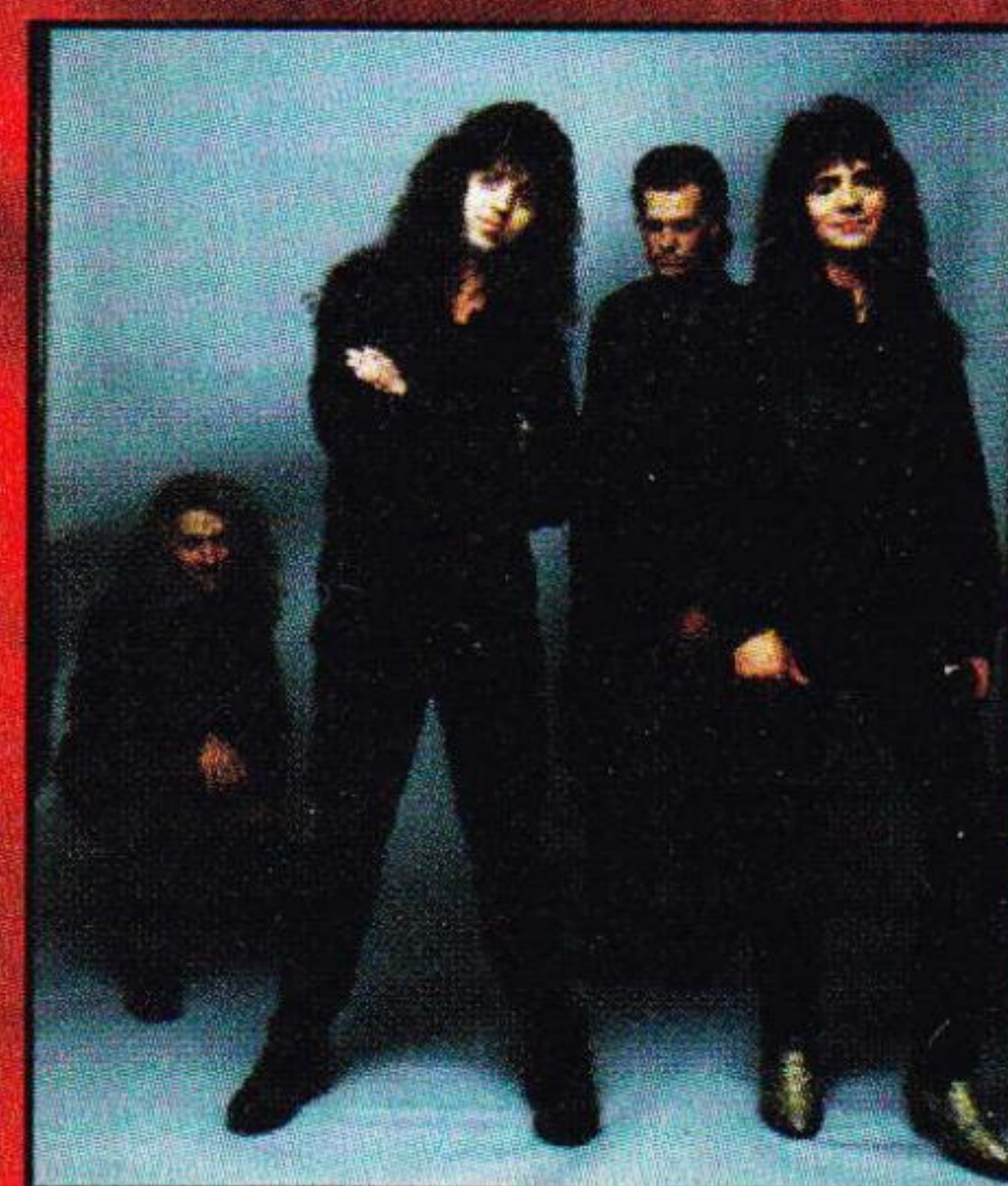
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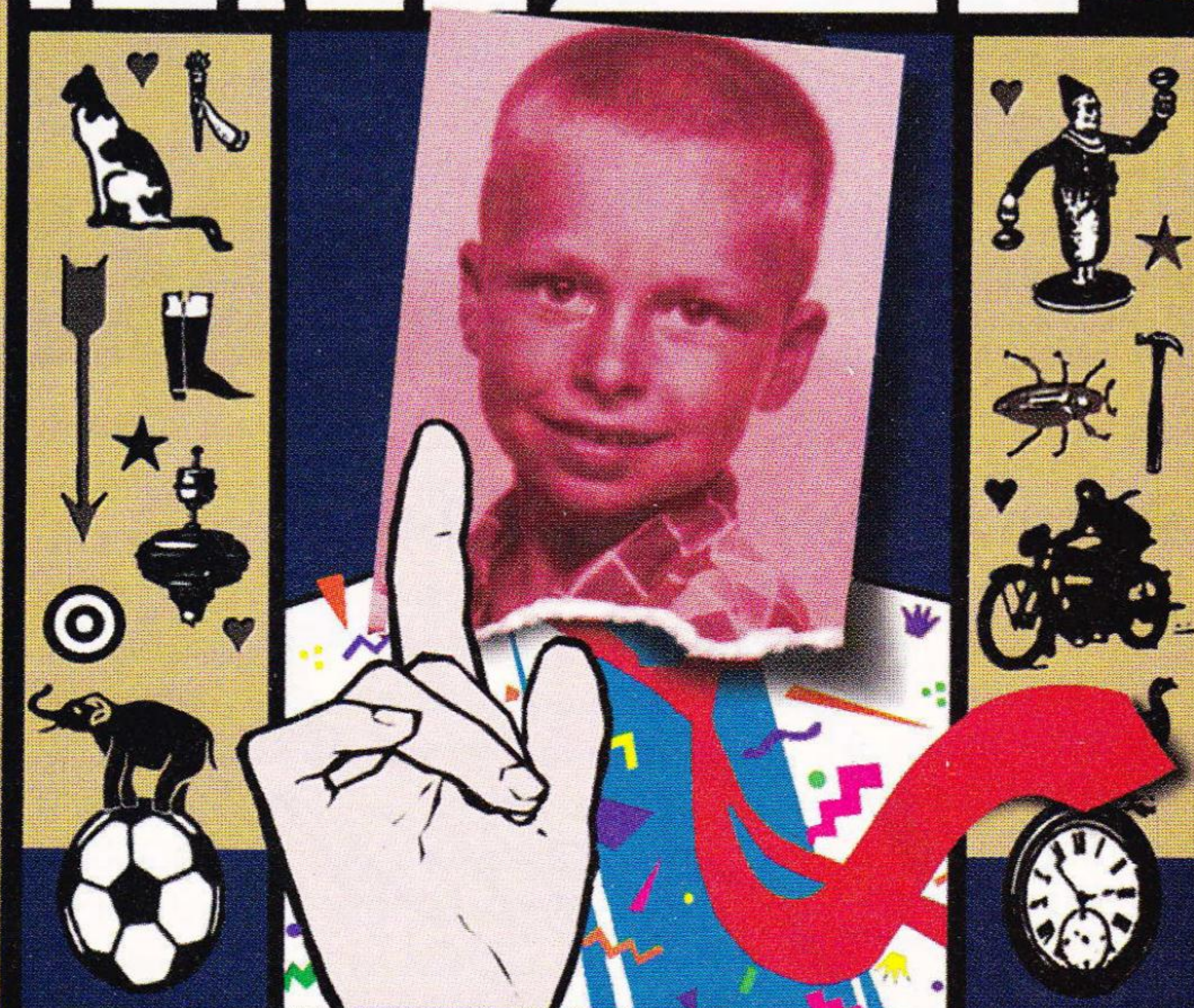
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UNVEILING THE "NEW" WHITECROSS

This might have been just another Whitecross album with the obligatory Heaven's Metal story to go along with it; but, with the departure of guitarist Rex Carroll, this will be anything but just another release from Whitecross. To find out just what was going on with the new band and their new album, Heaven's Metal writer **Dave Muttillio** caught up with Whitecross frontman Scott Wenzel.

TELL US ABOUT THE DEPARTURE OF REX CARROLL. WHAT'S YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON WHY YOU AND REX WENT YOUR SEPARATE WAYS?

"The way I look at it," says Scott, "is God put us together for a season. We need to stay sensitive and continually re-evaluate our goals and calling, and that's what we did. He realized that he needed to move on, and I knew that God was not finished with Whitecross yet. It's kind of scary, because I thought, 'Can we do it without Rex?' But Rex wasn't the force behind it all anyway, it was really God, so we have a new band and actually, I think it's better than it's ever been. We have new music that really sounds fresh -- not just sounding like remakes of old songs."

WHAT WAS THE BASIC IMPETUS OF THE SPLIT BETWEEN YOU AND REX?

"It really was the we felt we were just not to work together anymore. I really believed that God had more for me. And he wanted time off, didn't want to be touring, just to do his own thing. I think he just realized that he didn't want to do it anymore with me. We just realized we were done. I think it's wisdom to realize that at the right time and be able to move on."

WHAT WAS THE POINT IN KEEPING THE NAME WHITECROSS; SINCE, IN ESSENCE, THE WHITECROSS SOUND WAS YOU AND REX?

"The name was given to me when I was reading the Bible. I actually started the band. I was Whitecross before Rex joined. It was something God gave to me. When we started the band, Rex didn't even like the name. He wanted to think of something else, but I had established Whitecross and he joined on."

"We lost a vital member; but, as



TRACY FERRIE, BARRY GRAUL, SCOTT WENZEL, MICHAEL FEIGHAN

far as the carry-on, it's because God said to carry on until He says carry on no more. I've re-evaluated that my own self several times. I thought, 'Am I done now? Is it my turn to cash in?' You know, I see bands left and right quitting. I've felt road weary from touring and wondering if it was my turn to quit. God keeps saying, 'No, I've got more for you to do, bigger and better.'"

"You get somebody with new, fresh ideas working with the same old shoe (me), and you get a new pudding."

LET'S TALK ABOUT YOUR RECORD CONTRACT. YOU WERE WITH STAR SONG. WHY DID YOU LEAVE?

"Our contract was up. There were a lot of things that went on under the table that were beyond my knowledge until it was too late. Rex had realized that he

didn't want to work with me anymore, and he'd gone to Star Song and tried to work out a solo deal. As far as Whitecross business went, it was him doing it most of the time. So, when I found out there was a problem with Star Song not wanting to sign us anymore, I sat down in the office and was told that Whitecross would be better off with a vocalist who could sing adult contemporary hits; and that's not me, because my voice is never gonna make A.C. the way we were anyway. God's hand worked, and He's going to get what He wants done done, whether man tries to get in His way or not."

WHY R.E.X.?

"We were shopping deals and they came up with the best offer for us. And R.E.X. has a lot of good plans. Gavin Morkel, our manager from the beginning, has always known the heart of the band and we believe there won't be any communication gap between the band and the label by signing with the label he runs - R.E.X.."

"I just know that this is the best Whitecross album ever put down on track. I've never done a Whitecross record and loved it all so well as this one. I've liked certain songs on each album, and I wrote or co-wrote most of those songs with Rex."

Cont'd on page 33

The New King James Version

By Dave Hart

Can you believe it's been eight years since Whitecross put out their first album in 1987? I had just started as the Pastor of the Sanctuary here in San Diego. Over the next few years, I had several opportunities to work with the band when they were performing here in the area. At that time, I honestly felt that the two best *ministry* bands in the business were Whitecross and One Bad Pig. So, I was kind of saddened to read in *Heaven's Metal* a couple of issues ago, that Rex Carroll had left Whitecross.

But times goes on and things change. I found myself working less with the "Stryper" crowd and more with the "Mortification" mentality. As music moved more toward death metal and grindcore, I lost touch with some of the old bands. That's why I was so enthusiastic when "Chief" Van Pelt asked if I wanted to interview Rex Carroll about his new project, King James.

We started out by talking about Rex's departure from Whitecross. Was it really the proverbial "musical differences?" Rex took some time to carefully explain that there was no animosity with any of the other band members and he had nothing bad to say about his time with

"We've left an open door for Robert and Tim to join us on tour."

Whitecross. It basically boiled down to two things: First, Rex felt that he had said everything musically that he could say with Whitecross. After seven albums (including the best-of), he had done everything he felt he could do with that style and approach to metal. Secondly, Rex discovered that he had been absorbed by the responsibilities of the band until there was no balance left in his life. His family, his personal life, his devotional life were all taking a back seat to functioning for the band. It was just time to take a break.

I moved on to tell him that I liked



JIMI & REX

what I heard in the pre-release of the new project. It's the style I really enjoy. Heavy in Dio/Queensryche sense, yet very relatable in the lyrics. And I was really surprised to see that Robert Sweet and Tim Gaines from Stryper were the drummer and bassist on the project. But it wasn't long before Rex reprimanded me for referring to the new band as a "project!"

"King James isn't a project," he says. "A project is when you're working on a demo to try to get signed or it's a one-shot studio effort. King James is a band and Star Song has signed us for a five-album commitment. We intend to work together as a band for the long haul."

"As far as Robert and Timmy are concerned...man, I love those guys. They're awesome brothers. We just had a fantastic, fun time together. Originally, they just came out to play on the album and we really didn't know what to expect. But the chemistry was phenomenal! It was just non-stop hang-out time, and every once in a while we had to shut that down long enough to do some recording. When I told Star Song how much fun this album was to do, Darrell Harris said, 'Good! Because albums that are fun to record are usually fun to listen to.'"

"Right now, Robert and Tim are working on their own project, but we've left the door open for them to join us on

tour, and we're just waiting on the Lord to see what He's going to do. I'd love to see them become a permanent part of this band."

I was also curious about the singer, Jimi Bennett. I'm afraid I didn't recognize the name. "Jimi's been a good friend of mine for about five years. He sang with a Christian rock band called Sacred Fire and he's pretty well known in the Atlanta area. They put an album out for Star Song back in 1986 and toured for about three years with bands like Mylon Lefevre and Petra. But, for all intents and purposes, this will really be his national debut."

Jimi contributed quite a bit to the writing of the songs, and several involve true stories from his personal life. "Hard Road To Go" is about Jimi's brother, who is now serving time for dealing cocaine. It's also about how that affects the family and spiritual relationships with God as well.

The song "Miracles" is about Jimi's daughter, who was miraculously healed of a brain tumor five years ago. Today she's a living, breathing, walking testimony of the love and power of Jesus Christ. One of the goals Jimi wants to accomplish through the band is to bring a message of healing to his audience. In addition to the salvation message, Jimi

wants to remind people that God is still the Great Physician, and He wants to heal us spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

Rex produced and played on the album and has really diversified his sound. For one thing, there's a lot more acoustic guitar in the mix. Gone is the "Nagasake" - style solo. Instead there's a beautiful Spanish-sounding acoustic guitar piece called "Sunrise in Rio," inspired by Whitecross' trip to Brazil. Some of the other numbers include "Prisoner," which is an allegory about how Christians are actually ambassadors in chains. The song "Rev Rider" is a musical depiction of the two riders of Revelation -- the "Pale Horse" of Death, and the White Rider, who is Jesus Christ. Rex's song, "Touch The Fire," is an expression of gratitude to God for his life. There's even a borderline "grunge" track called "Choices." The album is musically and lyrically so deep, you'll hear more and more, the more you play it.

"Face to Face" is one of the most emotional songs on the album for Rex. It's an ode to a good friend of his named Debi Christmas. She was working at a Christian radio station in Kansas, when she suddenly died of a heart attack. She was only 43. Rex had just been on the phone with her the day before, and she had been encouraging him about his musical

direction. Writing the song was a source of release and praise for Rex. The song affirms that, in God's kingdom, we never lose the believers we love on a permanent basis. The day will come when we will see them again, face to face.

So, for all the fun the guys had together, there were many emotionally intense moments as well. Jimi would occasionally become so moved with the music he would start crying in the middle of recording the track. They would have to stop recording and wait for a while before they could continue. The engineer got so taken with the material he had to leave the booth on a couple of occasions, too. "The Spirit of God was just all over this album. It was just pretty intense all the way around."

This all sounds great, but when are we going to get a chance to see and hear this music? "The album should be out late in August or early in September. As far as a tour, it's still too early to tell. We're hoping to go out in the Spring of 1995 and do about 30 or 40 dates." Rex is also working on a solo album, which he describes as being in the "blues" vein. And he will probably be producing a few projects for Star Song down the line as well.

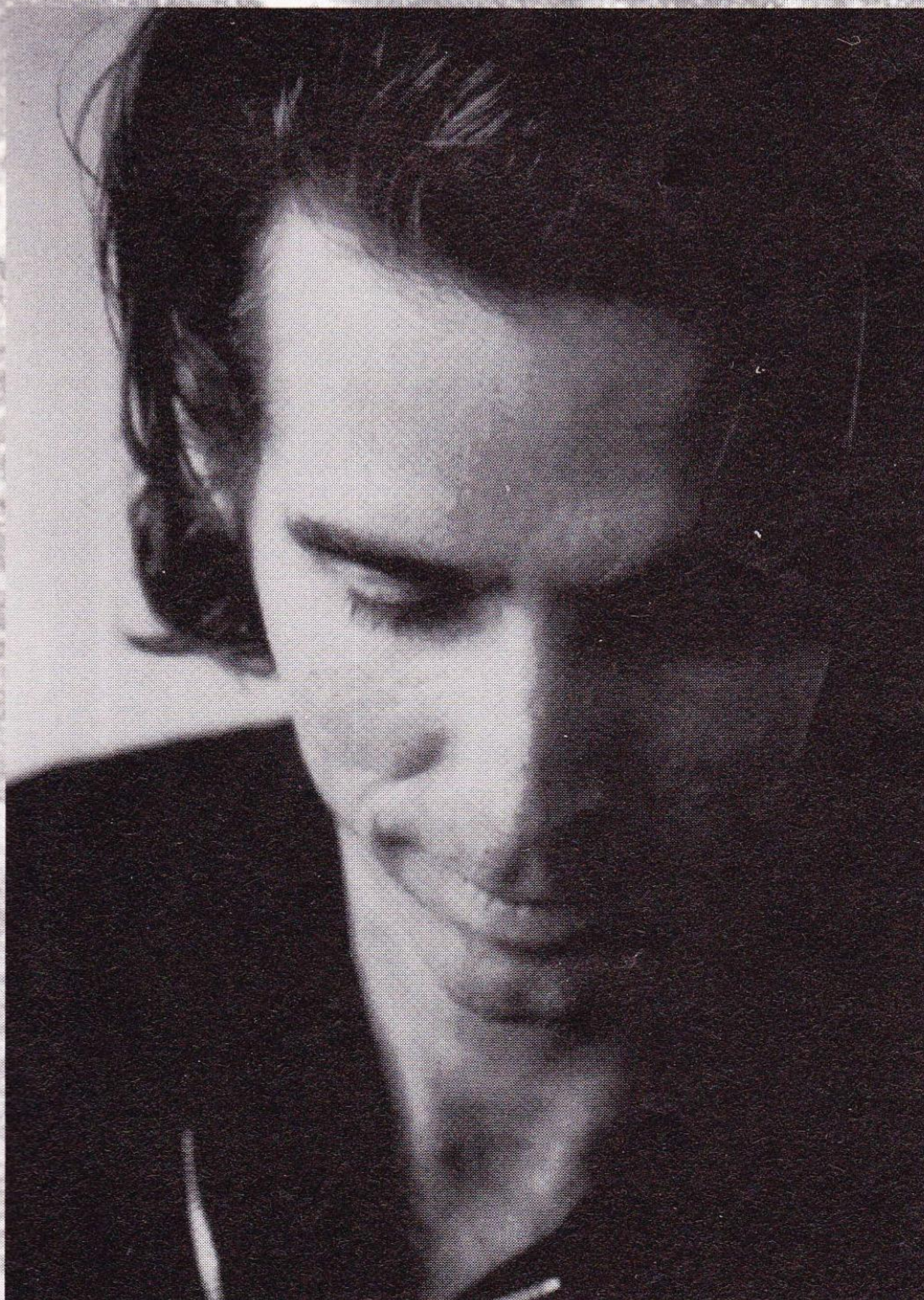
And I just had to ask the standard, "Where did you come up with

the name for the band?" question. I wondered if he thought it might be a bit old fashioned for the metal crowd. Actually, Rex's mom came up with the name. It not only obviously refers to the Bible translation, but it reflects the core of the band: Rex (which is Latin for King) and Jimi (James).

Any last words for the Christians out there, Rex? "Did you know that 50% of the world still hasn't heard the Gospel? Everybody thinks that Billy Graham has already taken care of everything, but the truth is that we still have a lot of work to do. This is no time for Wallflower Christians who sit by and do nothing. We can't afford to just be hearers of the Word. We've gotta be do-ers of the Word, too."

So, there you have it. Everything you wanted to know about Rex since he left Whitecross. As Rex drifts off into the Sunset near Chicago, we hear his final parting words to the readers of Heaven's Metal: "Anybody who wants to write to me can send a letter to PO Box 9191, Waukegan, IL 60079. I can't answer every letter, but I try to read everything that comes in. So, hey man, rock and roll! We'll catch you out there, huh?"

Hey man! King James rules, dude. HM



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Looking Back With The Crucified

By Andy Crump

For many fans of Christian music, The Crucified holds a special place. And, for many, it was hard to see them walk off the stage last year for the last time. But, The Crucified is more than a band that created intense hardcore riffs and rhymes. It was four individual lives dealing with God in their own personal way.

It's been over a year, and yes, there is a life after The Crucified. Mark, as he put it, is working hard for his money and trying to be an honorable man of God. Greg is playing guitar in a mainstream rock band called Sweet Mary. Jim has a second child on the way and is playing drums off and on for The Blamed. Jeff is staying busy with his new band Chatterbox, whose debut album was released July 15th on Tooth & Nail Records.

I had the privilege and honor of spending a small amount of time with each of these men. I do not consider it a privilege and an honor because they were once a part of The Crucified, but because each of them shared with me something personal. I have found it hard to intertwine my own words with their words. That explains why this story has been structured so unusual. In an attempt to somehow bless you the way Mark, Greg, Jim and Jeff have blessed me, I have picked out parts of the interview that meant the most to me. My prayer is that God will speak to you in the same way He has spoken to me.

Mark Salomon

"The Crucified breaking up was a very good thing. If anyone really cares about the members of The Crucified, they'll recognize that. We had some stuff that we needed to get straight with our God. Our God is the only reason why we are here. In the breaking up, there was some chaos and there was some turmoil, but only because we had built houses on sand. I had built my own world on an unstable foundation. It's part of God's discipline in our lives to strip us of the things that we consistently hold on to. God knows what's best for us, and I think that



MARK, JIM, JEFF, GREG

any Christian who gives just a second of thought to that will realize that and realize that God wants the best for you.

"It doesn't matter who I was involved in. It doesn't matter what I did or what I didn't do. Feeling independent from God is just so arrogant. You think you know everything. When God lets you know what you know, it's a scary thing. When God allowed me to see what it was like to be alone, I sort of lost it. But, He was always there and never left me. He just allowed me to see what it means to be by yourself -- without Him.

"I'm not really into the whole Christian music thing right now. I'm into God, and I'm into serving Him with my whole heart. I'm also into delivering the Gospel to people who haven't heard it yet. There are things that I'd like to do, things that possibly the Lord is opening the door for. But, there are things that God has opened the door for and closed. I think a lot of it is an exercise in practicing His will. I've sang on a couple of records this past year, but I don't have anything of my own. I'm not in any position to be dealing with that right now."

Greg Minier

"Basically, what happened was that I was seeing a girl, and she got pregnant. When she got pregnant, I told the band. I knew I had to quit. I've seen a lot of reality of life. Through growing up and being in The Crucified when I was 14, I kind of grew up in a sheltered life. I was pretty much a new Christian when we started the band. I've seen a lot of reality and learned that things can happen to

anyone. I never thought that this would happen to me. When you're basically fooling around in sin, it's going to come back to you.

"We always tried to impress on people when we were in The Crucified that, just because someone is in a Christian band, doesn't mean that fans should look up to them spiritually. You get that a lot, especially when you are in a respected band. People look up to you and think that you are so wise and think you're this phenomenal Christian, and it's just not true. You're no different from anyone else. You make all the same mistakes. I hope, through my experience, that people can kind of see that."

Jim Chaffin

"There's a new trend in the Christian music scene, which is basically anything goes -- people not really caring about souls anymore or for the lost or even creating an art form that is glorifying to God. They just want to make cool music and be in a band. God has so much more for us as individuals than just being in a band. It's not all it's cracked up to be, for one. Jesus was very explicit and adamant about how dangerous it was to stumble other Christians to the point where you're better off to just kill yourself -- tie a millstone around your neck and jump into the ocean. I don't think a lot of the Christian bands out there are taking that into consideration. There's a lot of the 'what you don't know won't hurt you' kind of an attitude going around.

"Even as Christians we've gotten so wrapped up in what's cool and

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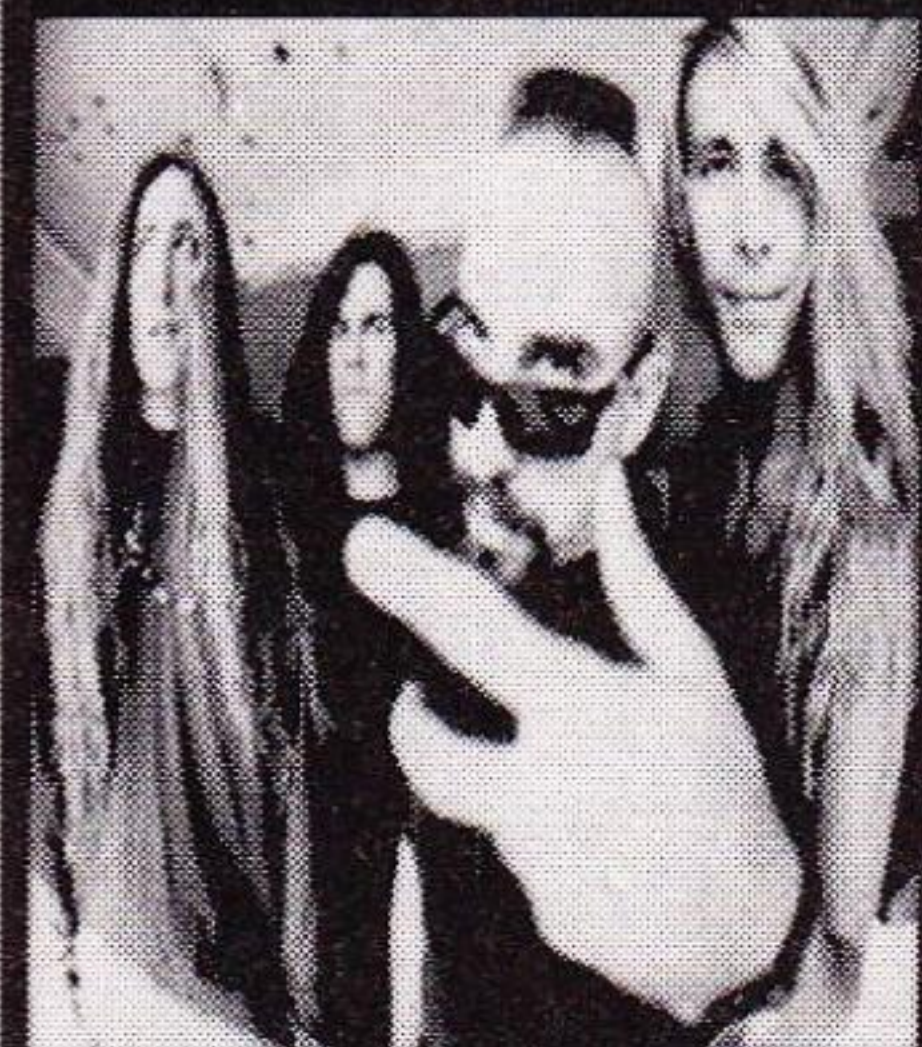
HM #49

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Featuring The Cuts:
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"SO FAR AWAY"
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Paramaecium -- Exhumed For Your Inspection

By Doug Van Pelt

Shocking. Bold. Intense. These are some of the reactions that Paramaecium's debut album, *Exhumed From The Earth*, evoked in my own mind the first time I experienced it. When I heard that R.E.X. picked up the disc for distribution, I thought, "Good move!" Most death/grind fans will agree. To get the scoop on the band, we faxed over some questions and awaited the following answers. (Technology is so fun!)

WHAT HAS BEEN THE REACTION TO YOUR LIVE SHOWS?

"Most people pull up a chair," describes guitarist Jason De Ron.

"If it's a young crowd," explains bassist Andrew Tompkins, "they'll still mosh to the faster songs, but a common reaction has been that the crowd sits down. Afterwards, people say things like, 'It was great! The music just flows through you, because it's melodic and emotional.'"

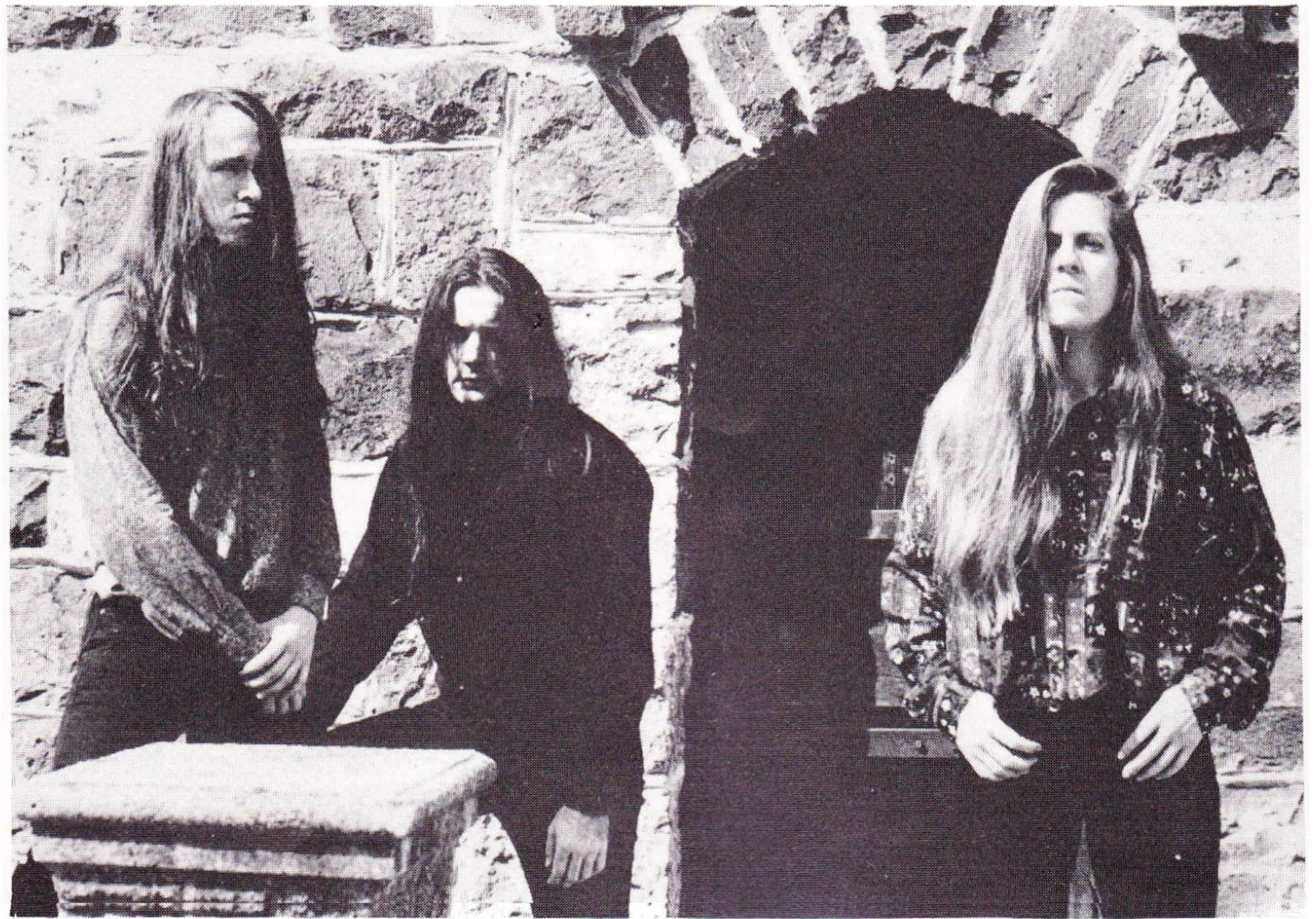
"I think that's better in a lot of ways," says drummer Jayson Sherlock, "because I'd rather see someone sitting there listening to the music and appreciating it rather than going sick."

JAYSON, WHY DID YOU LEAVE MORTIFICATION?

"I hope this will finally put all the rumors to rest. There were a number of reasons for my leaving. The musical style that Steve wanted to pursue was not the style that I wanted to continue with. I always felt that Mortification was a death metal band and thought that would continue, but Steve has chosen a lighter style of music, which is not what I would prefer to play. I feel that there are still people out there that get into the really heavy stuff and I believe that they still need to be ministered to and reached.

"Another reason is that I'm now a full-time art and design student. I wanted to pursue an art career and didn't want to tour as much and be so involved in the music side of things. I can't build a career by playing Christian death metal music. I'd rather think long term and build a career for myself in the art field, which I've always had a talent for.

"My leaving Mortification was very much a mutual decision. We had dinner together and discussed it and decided it was the best idea for the band. I made it clear that, if they ever needed a



ANDREW, JASON, & JAYSON

hand with anything, that I'd be there to help them out -- as you can see with the *Live Planetarium* album. We're still all friends and I still talk to Steve and Mick and I've made really good friends with Phil."

WHY DID YOU THEN DECIDE TO JOIN PARAMAECIUM?

"A lot of people probably got the idea that I left Mortification to join Paramaecium, and that's not the case at all. I promised Andrew that I'd help record the *Exhumed of the Earth* album as a session drummer months before leaving Mortification; and Steve was okay about that, otherwise, I wouldn't have done it.

"I really get along well with Andrew and always have. We seem to have a lot of things in common, including a really bizarre sense of humor, which all of us in the band share now. I prefer the heavier style of music, which obviously came out on the Paramaecium album, and I feel that Paramaecium is still reaching the people who are into the really heavy death metal style and that was the way I wanted to continue. Also, the fact that we don't have full-time, extreme career minded aspirations with the band. We each have other careers and studies that occupy our time and the band is really run on a part time basis.

"Another aspect is that our ministry basis is in Australia. Steve wanted to make Mortification more of a global thing and take it all around the world, whereas we wanted to keep our ministry local, because there are still unsaved people here. It's a policy of the band that we don't spend ministry money on overseas touring. We've recently been offered the opportunity to tour Europe, but this is being paid for entirely by European Christians organizing the tour. It's important to remain local ministry-wise, since we can easily follow up on people that need to know Christ or have recently accepted Him."

HOW DID YOU GUYS COME TOGETHER AS A BAND?

"The original members that recorded our demo, *Silent Carnage*, in 1991 was myself, Mosh, and Steve Palmer. In 1992, Mosh decided to leave the band and Steve and I needed a new guitarist. Straight after Mosh left the band, he led Jason De Ron to the Lord and soon after that Jason joined the band; taking over Mosh's position, whilst Mosh was disciplining him. So, Jason's salvation was a product of the Paramaecium ministry. Steve then decided to leave the band, but Jason and I continued on and planned to write and record an album. Christian drummers are pretty hard to come by in

Australia, and after looking for a short time, Jayson offered to help us out just for the album, whilst we continued to look for another drummer. We'd been close friends for years, and it seemed a natural remedy to the situation. The only condition I put on it, and I'm sure Steve did the same, was that it wouldn't impinge on the Mortification ministry at all. So, the three of us began rehearsing together and Jayson was quite busy at the time, because he was also rehearsing for *Post Momentary*... When Jayson left Mortification in February 1993, he then asked to join Paramaecium permanently, and it was from then that he got involved in the songwriting for *Exhumed of the Earth*.

"The album has taken off enormously. We recovered our costs within eight months of its release, mainly by just selling it through the mail. The sound of the album is really powerful, because Jason recorded two guitar tracks, which gave us a lot of scope with harmonics and leads. Unfortunately, though, this meant that our live sound was not full enough. So, we can finally take this opportunity to announce that we have a new guitarist. He had to leave his home in Lismore, about 1,500 miles from Melbourne, to join the band. It was a bold step to take on his part, but a step taken with the Lord's blessing.

"We met initially through correspondence. He originally wrote to us to order the demo and jokingly wrote that, if we ever needed another guitarist, to give him a call. So, I did. He flew down and auditioned for us in March this year, went home and sought God for a few months and has now moved down here. He's sharing a flat with Adam Hill, who used to be the editor for *The Oracle Magazine*."

YOU SIGNED A DEAL TO GET YOUR INDEPENDENTLY RELEASED ALBUM OUT. WHAT FUTURE PROJECTS DO YOU HOPE TO PUT OUT?

"When *Exhumed of the Earth* was first released," relates Andrew, "it was really only available from the band for about a year. To pay for its recording, we had to lend money ourselves, borrow from friends and even received pre-orders from friends and supporters around the world who were willing to believe in us. The pre-orders alone paid for a third of the studio costs, it proved to be a good investment. Just towards the end of last year both Witchhunt Records, a secular label in Switzerland, and R.E.X. Music in the U.S. showed a great deal of interest in *Exhumed*... and so we agreed to license the album for distribution by these companies

on their respective continents. R.E.X. have been really great with everything and I believe they'll do a fantastic job for the band in the U.S. and Canada. They were basically the only Christian label we even considered. They've just lined up secular distribution for us as well, through R.E.D., which is exactly what we were counting on.

"As for future projects, we are currently writing our second album, which is called *Within the Ancient Forest by Paramaecium. Exhumed*... incorporates a soprano, violins and flutes. Our ambitions for the next album are more involved and we are planning to incorporate more orchestral instruments with the doom death metal, and on a larger scale. This will entirely depend on the finances that we have at the time, since we are planning to once again fund the album without the help of a record label. The album won't be recorded until around April in 1995, since we have to put a lot of work into it. We are hoping that the pre-orders we receive for *Within the Ancient Forest* will pay for a majority of the studio costs and anyone who pre-orders will obviously be the first to receive the album. The pre-order cost is US \$15.00, which includes postage from Australia -- if you order before December 31st this year."

COMMENT ON SOME OF YOUR LYRICS.

"The lyrics of *Exhumed*... adhere to the Gospel of Christ," explains Andrew. "In fact, the entire album tells the story. I must say that, when I was first a Christian, I found the Gospels to be utterly boring. That was, until I read a book by F.W. Farrar, called *The Life of Christ*, written over a hundred years ago. Anyone who knows me knows my penchant for old texts. That book really made the Gospel come alive for me.

"The first song on *Exhumed*... is about the birth of Christ in Bethlehem and the tragic events that surrounded His birth. Herod was an evil ruler at the time and, once he heard from the Magi about this 'King of the Jews' Who was to be born, he set out to destroy Him. Herod was an overly jealous, suspicious and insecure ruler who killed most of the members of his own family because of his jealousy and suspicion. He feared this new 'King,' and so he ordered all the boys aged two years and under in the region of Bethlehem to be killed. That is what the song explores. Other songs relate Jesus' arrest, crucifixion, and resurrection. There is a song about Christian life today, an indication of the appropriate response to the Gospel, and finally a song which talks of the resurrection of the saints at the return of Christ,

which is the fulfillment of the Gospel."

To write Paramaecium: PO Box 46, Forest Hill 3131, Australia. **HM**

CRUCIFIED Cont'd:

what we can be into that's cool, that we don't even really care about how it's affecting our lives anymore. I see it in myself. That's why I say these things. I see the trend from within the Christian music scene. I was in a band that appeared to have everything together musically and spiritually, when it was only half right. You can put on a pretty good show and even fool yourself.

"The Christian music scene just needs a lot of prayer, but I definitely would not give up on it at all."

Jeff Bellew

"I just get tired of answering the same questions about The Crucified. I'm glad the interest is still there, but we all have other things we're doing, and we have other parts of our lives that we are concentrating on besides The Crucified. I understand that a band can be real personal to people if it's a band that means a lot to them. But, they have to understand that it meant a lot to us being in it. Ending the band wasn't a decision we made lightly. It was real tough on us. They expect us to console them in their hour of need -- as if we took something away from them. That's not the way it is at all. It was just as hard on us when the Lord told us to pack it in -- if not harder. We were the ones that had to give up something that we really believed in and wanted to do, but the Lord told us He had something else in mind for us.

"I really appreciate the people who can be sincere and go, 'Hey man, it meant a lot to me, and good luck in what you're doing now.' That's cool. I appreciate it when people appreciate the work I did. I don't think I'd like it if no one ever mentioned The Crucified again. I do believe we were a valid band and a valid ministry. We did a lot of valid work. That's fine. But, when they just make it like we owe them something, or get a little too emotional, it gets kind of weird."

"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." (Jeremiah 29:11)

HM

the future according to frankie...

by dan macintosh

Like the old cyberspace saying goes, "Time flies when you're having simulated G-force fun." It's just *Under Midnight*, and the Future Shock twins -- Frankie and dB Allen -- are back as the tour guides in our attempt to exit the *Void* and puncture the brilliant blackness. Technology continues to be the main topic of conversation, as gene splicing, information overload, and virtual reality are placed under the microscope for our moral inspection. Our main character, who naturally has no name, is given a time share in *Dystopia* (which is nothing more than a man-made suburb of Eden); but, as the album's libretto points out with obvious sarcasm, "Babel looked so good on paper."

Additionally, much of man's advanced technologies "look so good on paper," yet become disastrous in their applications. "On the first record," explains Frankie when pointing out the differences in the group's two albums, "we had more of an A-B-C plot. You know, here, here, here, end. In this one, we came up with the idea of more of a scenario where the first chunk of libretto is; here's a scene, here's a time, here's a situation, and here's this guy. And it's much more loosely put together and open-ended in the sense that once the libretto kind of paints the scene, then it's like the songs aren't so much a story as much as they are chunks of the environment, and the story is looser and more scattered purposely."

It makes a sort of strange sense to have this story more scattered, since the tale of mankind's journey is also scattered, illogical, and often senseless -- without Christ as the Ultimate Guide. The freedom of not being tied to a strict plot line also loosened up new creative possibilities for *Under Midnight*.

"It allowed us to touch on a few more things," continues Frankie, "also to have a little more fun with it. Also, not to be more spoon-fed. We felt the need to be fairly spoon-fed on the first one for the industry, because there was hardly any industrial out at all when we did the first one, though the *Mortal* record had just hit. We felt like, 'Wow, with the topics we want to talk about, and the music we want to use, we're going to have to spoon feed this to some degree, so that we don't overwhelm a new audience. With the second one, we didn't feel the need to do that as much, because two years had transpired, people were catching up to speed, and we didn't want to have to come up with part two of the story.'"

When talking to *Under Midnight*

after that first release, I came away with the impression that they were equal parts excited and scared by emerging technologies, such as virtual reality. With *Void* it seems the group is leaning closer to the scared end of the spectrum. "Like a lot of things," explains Frankie, "on the surface they can be a lot more fun than what their ultimate ramifications can be. So, as we've grown and understood, and as the technology has grown, we've understood how it works and what uses it's being put to, and what the projected uses are, and it is a little scarier. You know what I mean? It's like you don't know how scary your car can be until you max it out on a country road one night and flip the headlights out for about 15 seconds."

For the listener here, *Under Midnight* turns out the lights for about an hour, and this becomes one scary ride. But *Under Midnight* is not so serious that we don't have a little fun along the way. Listen closely to the cut "Oh Boy," which is made up of multiple samples placed against a hard-driving recorded track, and you just might hear the history of rock & roll -- from Elvis Presley to Nine Inch Nails -- and all in the same track! "That's a pile of fun, isn't it?" responds Frankie.

"dB and I are both huge rockabilly fans," admits Rockin' Frankie. "In fact, I just got back from Graceland and Sun Studios about ten days ago. I had a blast. We just hit upon the idea one night, 'Well, hey man! Why don't we do a technobilly tune?' We almost called the song, 'Technobilly,' but then we came up with the only two words to the song, 'Oh Boy.' It's my kids' absolute favorite song that I've ever written. And it's not like there's a lot of writing there; it's about 100% samples with a guitar bed. There's Elvis on there. There's Duane Eddy, and Gene Vincent. There's an illegal amount of illegally used samples of all the forefathers (of rock and roll). And probably my favorite sample on there is the Elvis vocal where he's saying, 'Well, I tried it, but I just can't stand still.'"

It's also hard to stay still listening to *Void*, since this is just as beats-per-minute driven as it is guitar and sample based. And, even though the industrial genre has mostly associated itself with the cold hard facts of future life, *Under Midnight* displays a sort of warmth and emotionalism not often found on these sorts of albums. Both the songs "Wel-



come to *Dystopia*" and "Guilty" exemplify the kind of bluesy vocalization most closely associated with bands such as the 77's (No kidding here, folks. Listen for yourselves and see).

Industrial music is a style all of us will be hearing in the near future if *Under Midnight*'s predictions come true. "I'm a firm believer," testifies Frankie, "that pop will be industrial within the next five years. It will just be that it will be continually hybridized to the point where someone finally has a hit that's acceptable -- a megahit with it. We just haven't hit like, say, Elvis did."

If and when industrial hits big time, it may be a nervous time for a lot of people. "When Elvis hit the mainstream," notes Frankie, "it scared the heck out of everybody, because all of a sudden all the kids were going, 'Hey, this is the next thing.'" When the common man gets a taste of some of the ideas expressed in industrial music, such as the dark views of life exposed in the songs of Nine Inch Nails, for example, it will be much more frightening than a poor young Southern boy shaking his hips.

Under Midnight doesn't realistically expect to be the next Steven Curtis Chapman, or even the next DeGarmo & Key (to name a group that is sort of close to rock). It's more likely that they will reach a small piece of the alternative pie, which is a pretty tiny pastry to begin with. "I think a lot of the same people who listen to the 77's or Hoi Polloi, or any of those alternative groups like The Choir, will be open to industrial music if exposed to it." And for those with a sense of adventure, *Under Midnight* can surely fill that adventurous void.

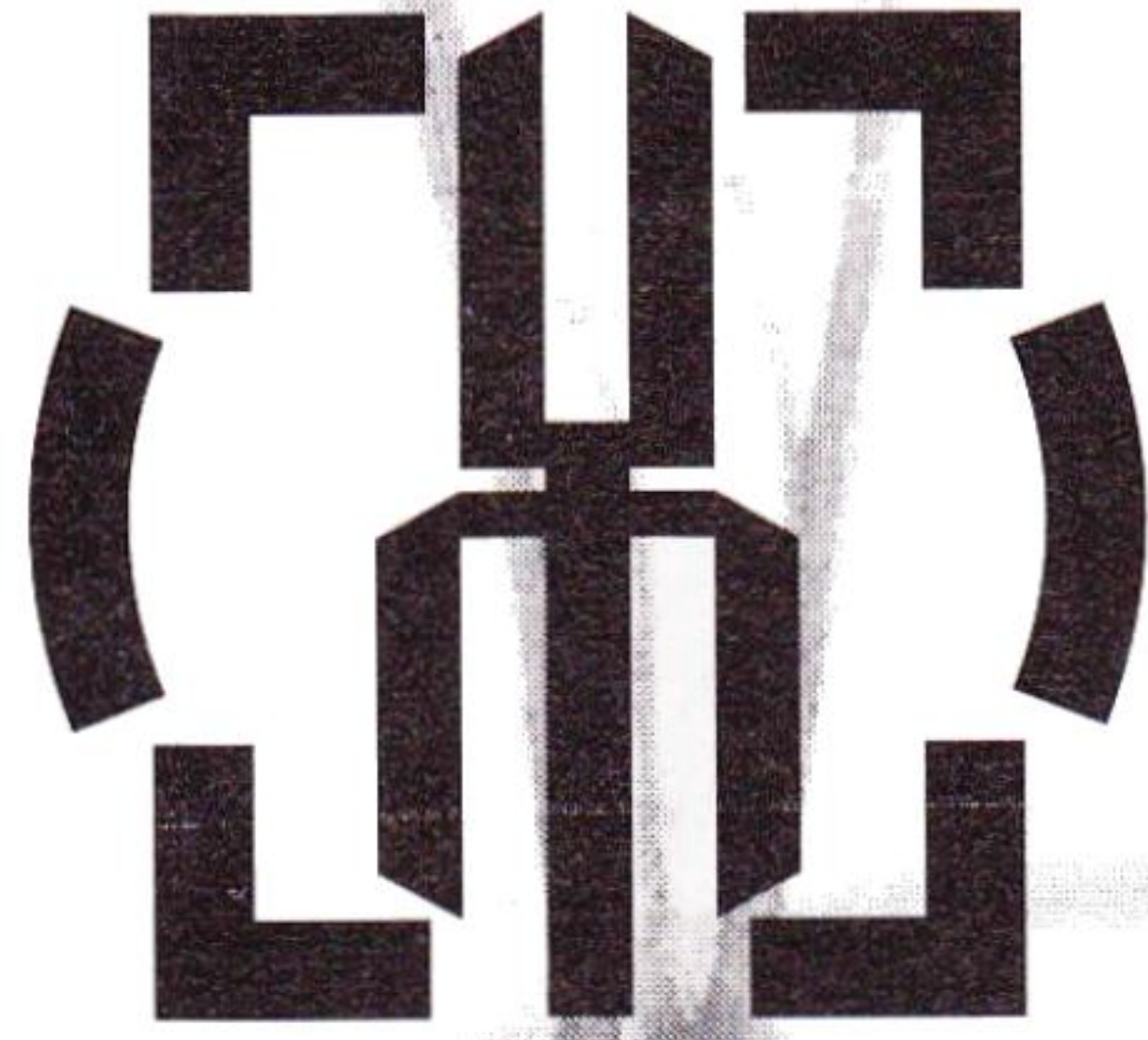
HM

HE DIDN'T have time to be afraid.

His sluggish synapses barely had time to register
the fact that he was *flying* before he punctured the
brilliant blackness and found himself at home
and yet...

so very far from where he had started.

UNDER



MIDNIGHT



TEMPLE
PRODUCTIONS

W.A.L.

W.
WORD

The Mad Men Behind Atomic Opera

From the hot 'n' humid city of Houston, Texas comes another Wilde Silas band -- Atomic Opera. Following in the footsteps of big brothers King's X and Galactic Cowboys, and yet forging their own identity, Atomic Opera is out on the road and on MTV promoting their debut album -- *For Madmen Only*. Ring leader and lead vocalist Frank Hart agreed to the following interview. Being a bit wary to speak to a known Christian magazine, Frank figured that, since we were buddies with his friend Kemper Crabb, that we couldn't be all that bad. After a short discussion of the pros and cons of living in the West Texas desert, the interview turned to music.

HOW ABOUT A BRIEF HISTORY OF ATOMIC OPERA?

"We've been together, oh, maybe two and a half years. I was in another band before this -- called Love In Grey. Basically, that band was sort of one-dimensional, I thought. I was playing bass in it. I was really kind of getting discouraged with it, so I quit that band and wanted to start a new band and build it around myself as a guitar player. One of the first persons I called was Dave Marshall (of Arkangel fame) -- a friend of mine who's a great blues guitar player. I said, 'Hey, I was wanting to put together a band...' and he said, 'No,' that he was gonna hang out with Kemper (Crabb) and do that. He said he was going to stick with Kemper for better or for worse.

"About a half-hour later I got a call from his son, Jonathan. He wanted to audition. He was 16 years old. I said, 'Hey, sure. Let's do it!' We went down and he was a great guitar player -- very tight and powerful and rhythmically just real aggressive. He picks up on everything so fast...any little thing I want to show him. I'll go through it once and he's got it. He's great. He's very expressive in writing. He was a little rough, but he definitely showed tons of potential in songwriting and arranging.

"The next person to join was Mark (Poindexter). He's from Louisiana. He's real soft-spoken and a sweet sort of person. He's a real friendly guy. He came in and was playing. He played a song and was very still and reserved. He was so laid back, but I just felt like he could do it. We did our first show about six weeks after we put the band together, and Mark just came out of his shell, banging on his drums, breaking 'em and stuff. His hands were



MARK, JONATHAN, JONAS, FRANK

bleeding after the show. We were like, 'Who are you?' He was great.

"A little bit later Jonas (Velasco) joined the band. Jonas is a friend of mine. He works odd jobs with me and hangs out with me and stuff. We've hung out for a few years. He was the bass tech for our old bass player. I was sitting at the sound board one day during sound check, just kind of listening to what was going on, and Jonas was up there tweaking out the bass and he was playing amazing bass riffs. He wasn't thinking about it, he was just tuning the bass or whatever. But what he was playing was just way over the head of the bass player that we had at the time. He couldn't touch him, plus Jonas just looked so cool... I thought, 'You know, this guy's got to be in the band.' A little while later that bass player quit the band. I said, 'Hey Jonas, come and play with us.' We played for a while and wrote a bunch of songs and Sam (Taylor) listened to some of our demos here and there. We finally got a break and we played a show for Derek Shulman of the Collision Arts label. He signed us up that night. We did a record."

HOW DOES HAVING AN ALBUM OUT CHANGE THINGS FOR YOU GUYS?

"It makes going to the mall a little more interesting. You can go into the record store and say, 'Hey, look! This is me!' Actually, having the album out hasn't changed much yet, but getting a record deal and being able to do music full-time is just wonderful. It's everything I ever wanted to be able to do -- to concentrate all my time

in rehearsing and writing songs and working on things for the band. That's just great. It takes more time than working the odd jobs that I used to work...it takes more hours in the day to do this. In fact, I wake up and I get interested in something and I go to rehearsal and then it's time to go to bed. But it's great.

"We just got a manager last week -- Larry Naser out of New Jersey. He's been putting together a tour for us and getting Giant Records whipped into shape, working our single real hard. You know, it basically changes a lot. From here on out, every step is a new one, too, for everyone in the band.

"We had played in clubs and written songs and recorded demos. Even making the record didn't seem all that different -- only we spent a real long time. The only difference was it was longer. We got it just how we wanted it. We got to get that perfect sound.

"Making the video was something. We hadn't done that. That was a lot of fun. We got to go to Mexico and shoot the video. We shot a lot of that in West Texas. We came up with concepts for the video. I wasn't thrilled with the way the video was edited, necessarily, but I think the image was real cool."

WHY DON'T YOU BREAK DOWN YOUR BAND'S SOUND FOR US?

"Well, I just know that I'm not happy with a song until it works on more than one level. Like I said, the last band that I was in was sort of one-dimensional.

I enjoy a lot of different kinds of music, but it seems to me like it would be better if it had more than just that aggressive groove. I want music to have that -- that's what Jonathan and Jonas do, they have that aggressive sound. Over the top of that I like to play these more open, broken chords or notes. I like more of an ambient kind of thing. I like to work more into the song.

"I think everything has to stand on its own. The groove has to stand on its own. If you take the groove out of the song, I could sing on top of it and it would work; at the same time, I can take the melody and I could get up there with an acoustic guitar and I could play my part and it would work in a whole different way, because the counterpart guitar that I play -- it also works by itself. This is how I write songs.

"I don't use harmonies the same way a lot of people use them. I like to use them more as atmosphere, sort of like how a lot of people use keyboards -- as texture. That's how I like background vocals. Everyone is a singer, or at least everyone thinks they are. We relate most immediately to the human voice, because it's how we communicate; so it seems to me that it makes a whole lot of sense to use it.

"The melody has to stand on its own. If you sit down at the piano and poked out the notes one at a time, they should work by themselves too. The lyrics should hold up line by line, just like a poem would. So, I guess I'm saying, 'before a song is finished, for me, every aspect has to be able to stand up on its own two feet and survive. Then, when you put it all together, it doesn't make a big pile of junk; but it makes its own song.'"

HOW ABOUT THE BASS SOUND?

"Well, instead of going for the 'airplane bass' that a lot of people are going for these days -- where the bass takes up every register of the frequency spectrum -- I thought that the bass should sound like a bass. So, we use a bass and made it fit a real compressed place, a real low end. It's a bass guitar. The bass guitar is played the way it should be. As a four-piece band, there was no reason to take the mid-range and upper range of the frequency level with the 12-string bass and stuff. There's no reason for that -- we have another guitar player."

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE PURPOSE FOR ART?

"I think the purpose of art for me is to ask questions, to shake up people and their preconceptions. Everybody believes what they believe and they feel strongly about it, and yet we've all come to our

various conclusions about what truth is and about what we believe based on everything -- based on culture, tradition, religion. Sometimes we study and we find some stuff and, for the most part, our preconceptions are based on fundamentally applied conclusions. We only ever challenge a handful of them in our life. Our preconceptions are from things we're bombarded with.

"I think that art is one of the most important ways to make sure our preconceptions can be shaken. When art is not propaganda, but when art is just art, not a cheapened expression... That's what art comes from for me. It's for the questions I have. If I have a problem in my life that's questioning or frustrating, sometimes I'll write it down. Those are the thoughts that become lyrics.

"Musically, if there is such a thing as a musical question, you ask them, like, 'What is beautiful?' You've gotta be careful with that too. Art is meant to be enjoyed. It doesn't equate with propaganda, or a tool to promote a philosophical position... then I think that art has lost its place. Of course, we bring all those things to our art, but it has to start there. It has start with our feelings of something meaningful and beautiful to do, as opposed to the other way around: having a philosophical stance and trying to find some meaningful or beautiful, artistic way to express it. That's the difference for me."

HOW DOES THIS VIEW-POINT FIT IN WITH A CHRISTIAN'S WORLDVIEW?

"Most of the Christians that I've met in my life, when they come upon somebody and they want to tell someone about their faith, most Christians are way too quick to sort of regurgitate and throw out everything that they know and believe and think on the particular subject. You spend your whole life getting to the point to where you understand things in a certain way, and this other person, who is maybe at step one -- right at the first point of even questioning life or truth or pride or anything -- and they come upon this other person (you), who has been questioning and going over things for 15 or 20 years, and this person throws all of his conclusions on this other person. Well, I think that's unhealthy. I think it's unhealthy to provide answers to people on that level. I think it's better to provide them with questions and direction."

IF YOU WERE A PROFESSOR IN A THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL AND WERE GOING TO TEACH A COURSE ON

EVANGELISM AND WERE HANDED A LOT OF THE BOOKS OUT TODAY ON EVANGELISM, WOULD YOU THROW OUT MOST OF THAT STUFF?

"Right after I hung myself," Frank jokes, "I would throw all those books out the window. I don't know. I haven't read any of those books, so that's not fair. I'm the last person in the world to be teaching on it."

DO YOU SEE A NEED TO REEVALUATE HOW A LOT OF US CHRISTIANS THINK WHEN IT COMES TO EVANGELISM?

"Absolutely. I think that most Christian's view of evangelism are along the same lines of the propaganda campaigns of Nazi Germany. They have this 'us against them' concept and they destroy art. They want to make films and music that make their philosophical position look good, which is not the same thing as art. That's part of the problem.

"The art has to have its own integrity. It's gotta be a good song, but a lot of times people sacrifice the art being good in favor of making all of its good aspects serve the propaganda end. It's just a platform. Understand, I'm only speaking from a very narrow perspective. I've only lived my life and I've come into contact with very few Christians and I'm reacting against them, so I don't pretend to be knowledgeable sociologically or anything about what the church should do. But, based on the few that I've come in contact with, that have spoke to me, I would say that, as far as the whole idea of 'Christian art' is concerned, the whole realm of Christian art, I think that it's grossly out of place."

THAT ANSWERS MY FOLLOW-UP QUESTION, WHICH IS: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MISCONCEPTIONS THAT MANY CHRISTIANS HAVE HAD CONCERNING ART?

"Have you ever read Rookmaaker's book -- Art Needs No Justification? He's got another book called Modern Art And Death of A Culture. This book basically sums up everything that I think about the Christian's place in art: 'If art stands by itself and has something intrinsically important and glorifies God, it needs no further justification as a tool.'"

I THINK THIS RUBS ACROSS A LOT OF THE GRAIN OF SOME OF THE PEOPLE IN THE CHRISTIAN ART COMMUNITY. YOU PROBABLY KNOW

THAT BANDS LIKE PETRA HAVE ESTABLISHED A MODEL FOR WHAT IS COMMONLY CALLED "MINISTRY." THEY PLAY THEIR SONGS AND THEN THEY PRESENT THE GOSPEL VIA PREACHING. SOME PEOPLE EXPECT EVERY CHRISTIAN MUSICIAN TO FOLLOW A SIMILAR MODEL. HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO SUCH PEOPLE CONCERNING ATOMIC OPERA?

"Let me just say this, 'For me personally, that would be an absolutely wrong thing to do. I believe that whatever decisions a person is going to make in their life about spiritual matters...they're true decisions, ones that really last throughout their life (and) they're gonna make those decisions when they're alone and when they're introspective. It's not going to be when they're pressed by this whole melodrama. I'm not saying that people aren't changed at things like that. When people come to that realization in their life...I would imagine that it really becomes real to them later, when they've had time to think about it -- as opposed to right at that moment. So, I just think it's wrong to do that.

"That has nothing to do with what we're about. We're about writing songs and issues that we want to see exist - things that should exist. There's music that I want to make, so I do. We record it and we try to do it as a band, so that we're happy with it. That's all. If we can have some small part in shaking people's preconceptions and having them ask themselves questions about everything that moves us in our lives to make us write lyrics. I think we're apt to learn an awful lot there."

I FULLY AGREE WITH YOUR VISION FOR ART. I REALIZE THAT, IN THE SMALL SUBCULTURE OF CHRISTIAN MUSIC, I THINK THERE'S NEED FOR, LIKE, A RENAISSANCE FOR HOW WE THINK ABOUT THE ARTS. I THINK WE HAVE TURNED A LOT OF IT INTO TRASH AND PROPAGANDA. I KNOW THAT, WITH SOME OF THE PEOPLE THAT HOLD THESE BELIEFS, YOU FACE AN UPHILL BATTLE IN TRYING TO CONVINCE THEM THAT YOU'RE NOT SOME DEMONIZED PERSON TRYING TO SEDUCE THE

YOUNG MINDS OF KIDS AND LETTING THEM OFF THE HOOK OF SPREADING THE GOSPEL THE WAY WE'VE ALWAYS DONE IT.

"The whole idea behind the cover of our CD, which I did, kind of sums up a lot. It is: windows are designed to let light in and to enable one to see outside, and the church is supposed to be a house of truth. So, in our houses of truth we put in windows that distort the light and don't allow us to see outside. That's the idea behind the cover. It's in reverse, because you're trying to look in."

I UNDERSTAND YOU GOT THE BUDGET TO DO THE COVER ART AND YOU BOUGHT THE COMPUTER AND DID IT YOURSELF.

"I worked for a magazine, a little color magazine, at one time. I've always kind of made things just for the fun of it, for gifts, or shirts, little demo CD covers and stuff, but this is the first thing I did for real. I really enjoyed it."

WHAT HAS BEEN THE LABEL'S PERCEPTION OF YOU GUYS SO FAR?

"Everyone says, 'Hey, great record! Let's take it over the top.' I believe Jesus is Who He said He was. I'm not very comfortable with being called a Christian or with the particular baggage that comes with what it means to be a Christian in our culture. I find that I have very little in common with Christians that I run into. It has a lot to do with their view of art and their view of culture. It has very little to do with theology. I was kind of apprehensive about doing this interview, but I knew that you were a friend of Kemper's and you couldn't be all bad."

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP SERVE YOU BETTER, BECAUSE I KNOW THAT I HAVE A MEDIA SOAPBOX AND I KNOW THAT I CAN HAVE AN INFLUENCE TO HELP PEOPLE FORM THEIR PERCEPTIONS -- EITHER GOOD OR BAD -- SO I WANNA BE ABLE TO DO A SERVICE, NOT A DISSERVICE.

"I appreciate that. I think there'd be a lot of people who do read your magazine who probably like our record, and anybody that can get turned on to it... I just know that a lot of people, you know, like King's X, have come off to other Christians like they're trying to sell out -- they're trying deny Christ and trying to backpeddle. If there is some way to let

Christians know that what I'm talking about here is not being ashamed of Christ. It's not being ashamed of whatever that means to me. It is being ashamed of what the connotations of being a Christian in our culture are, because I am ashamed of that.

"If you want to try and lump in what I am with televangelists and the state of the church and all of the cultural baggage that comes with what most people perceive as Christianity, that's foreign to me. That's foreign to how I live my life and how I understand my role. It has nothing to do with Who Jesus was. That's my understanding of it and that's how I live my life. At least personally that is...if I seem like I'm backpeddling or if I'm ashamed of something along those lines, that's what it is to me. It's that I am ashamed of what Christianity and the church is in our culture and what that means to most people."

DO YOU FIND YOURSELF AT PEACE WITH THAT, OR DO YOU WAGE WAR AGAINST THAT?

"In my circle of friends and in my life I have peace with who I am."

CONCERNING WHERE THE CHURCH IS IN OUR CULTURE IN THE UNITED STATES OR THE WEST, ARE YOU AT PEACE WITH WHERE THE CHURCH SITS? OR DO YOU WAGE A PERSONAL WAR AGAINST WHERE SHE SITS?

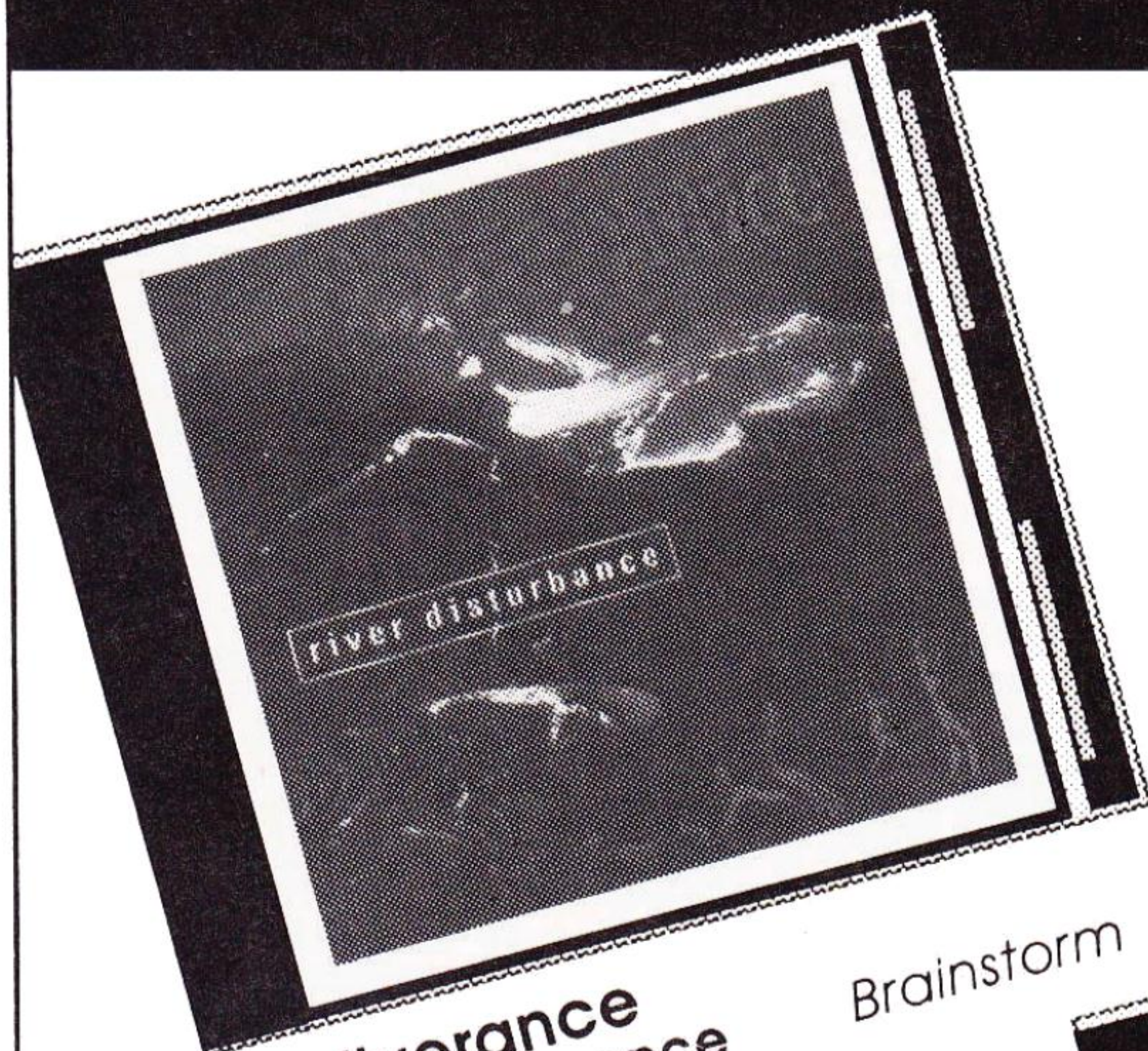
"Well, it's not that I want to wage war against the Church, capital 'C.' I would definitely like to see the church make more sense and have more impact on our culture and not be such a petty little counter-culture, looking like a little chihuahua nipping at the heels of the culture at large. They're not getting it. It's not being a light. It's not being salt."

DO YOU HAVE ANY ANSWERS FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT TO BE THAT?

"Nobody's going to make any kind of impact sitting in their room. The so-called 'Lone Ranger' is a false view of what we should be. Basically, I think that everybody should find other people that they can relate to and should band together with their people. I guess it's the old saying, 'You become the people you hang out with.' If you hang out with yourself, well, the heart of a man is deceitfully wicked above all things. Don't sell yourself short. I think the one thing in life, and what we long for and truly desire, and it can get you into a lot of trouble, but if

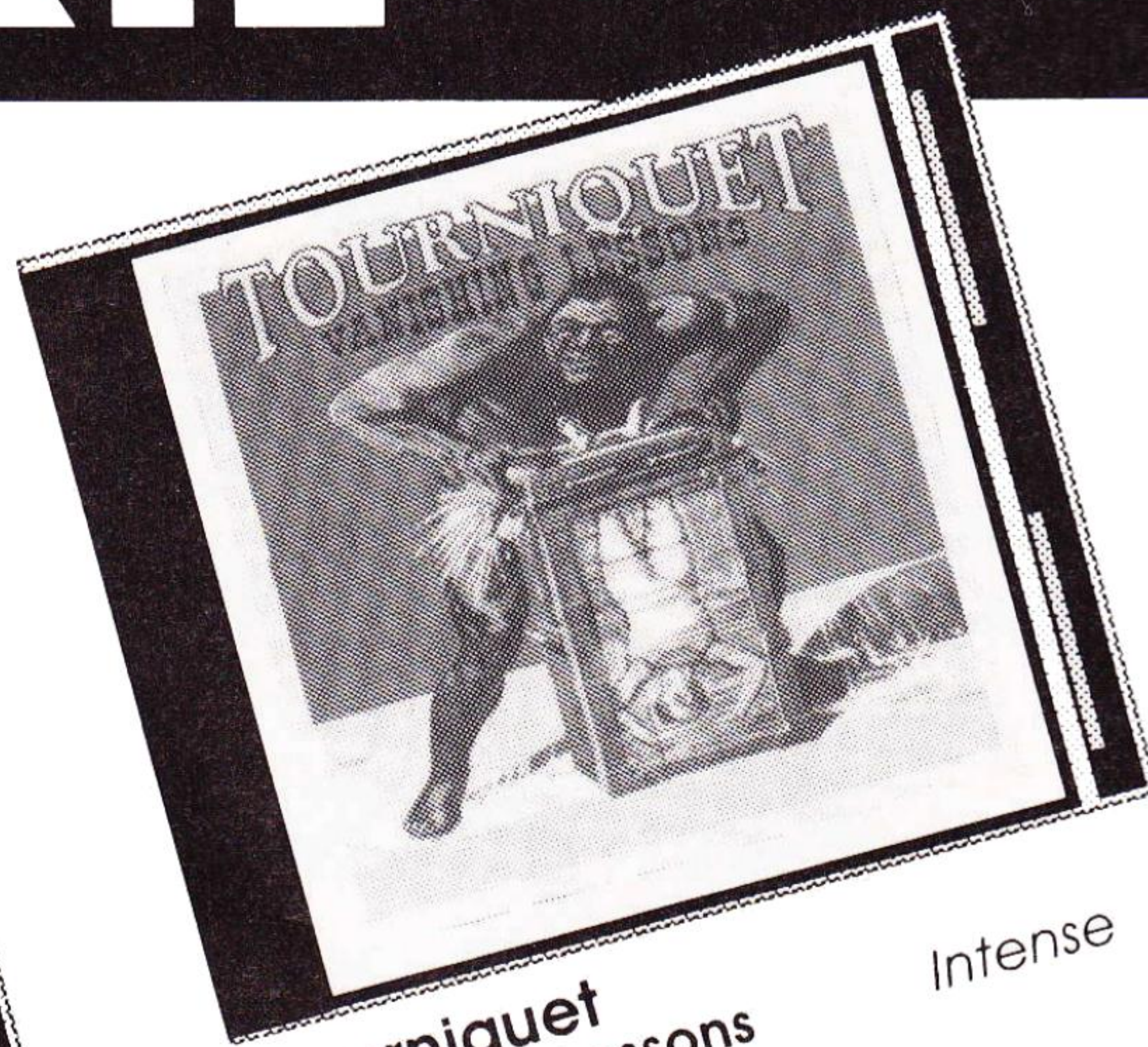
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Heavenly METAL.



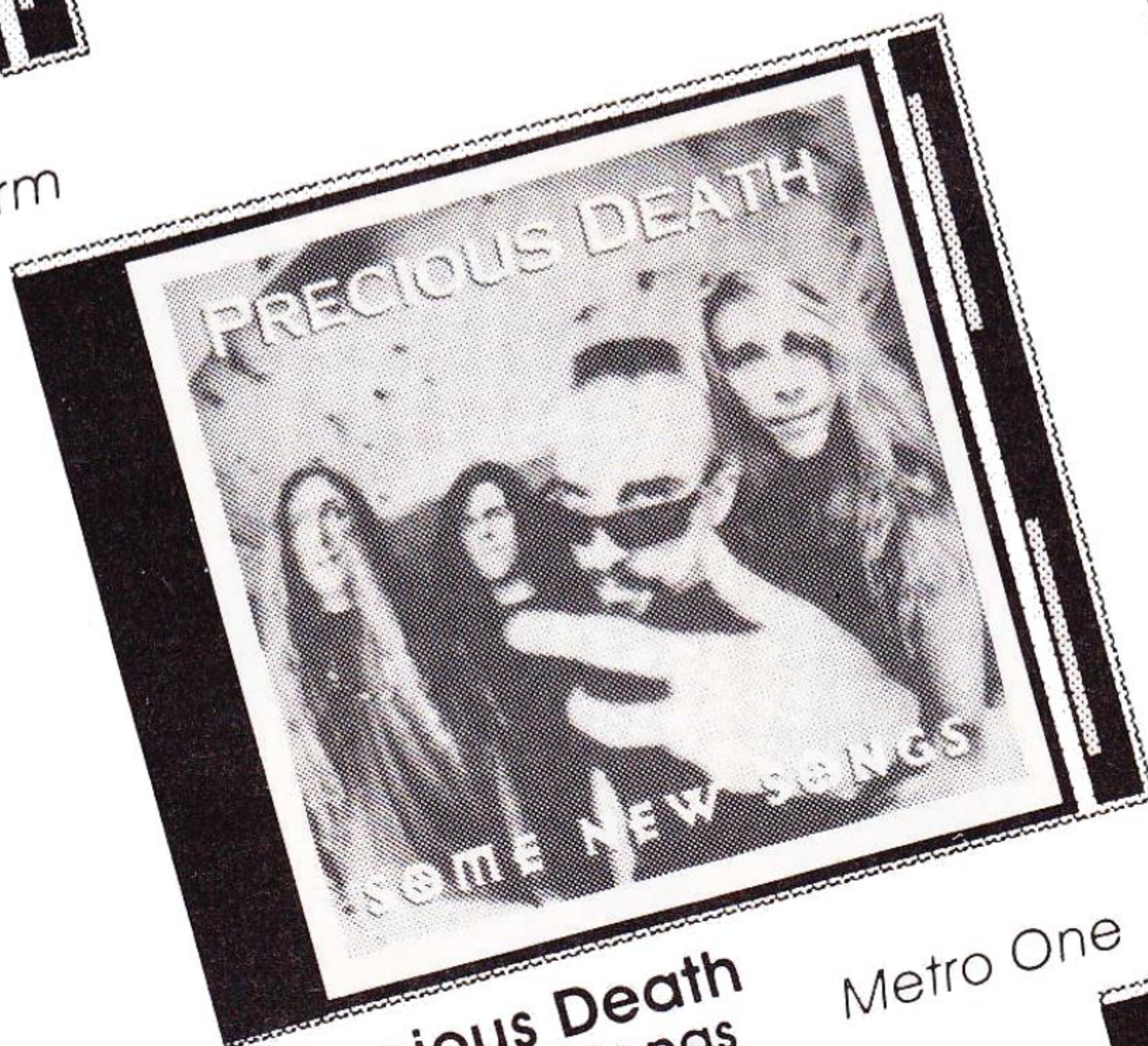
Deliverance
River Disturbance

Brainstorm



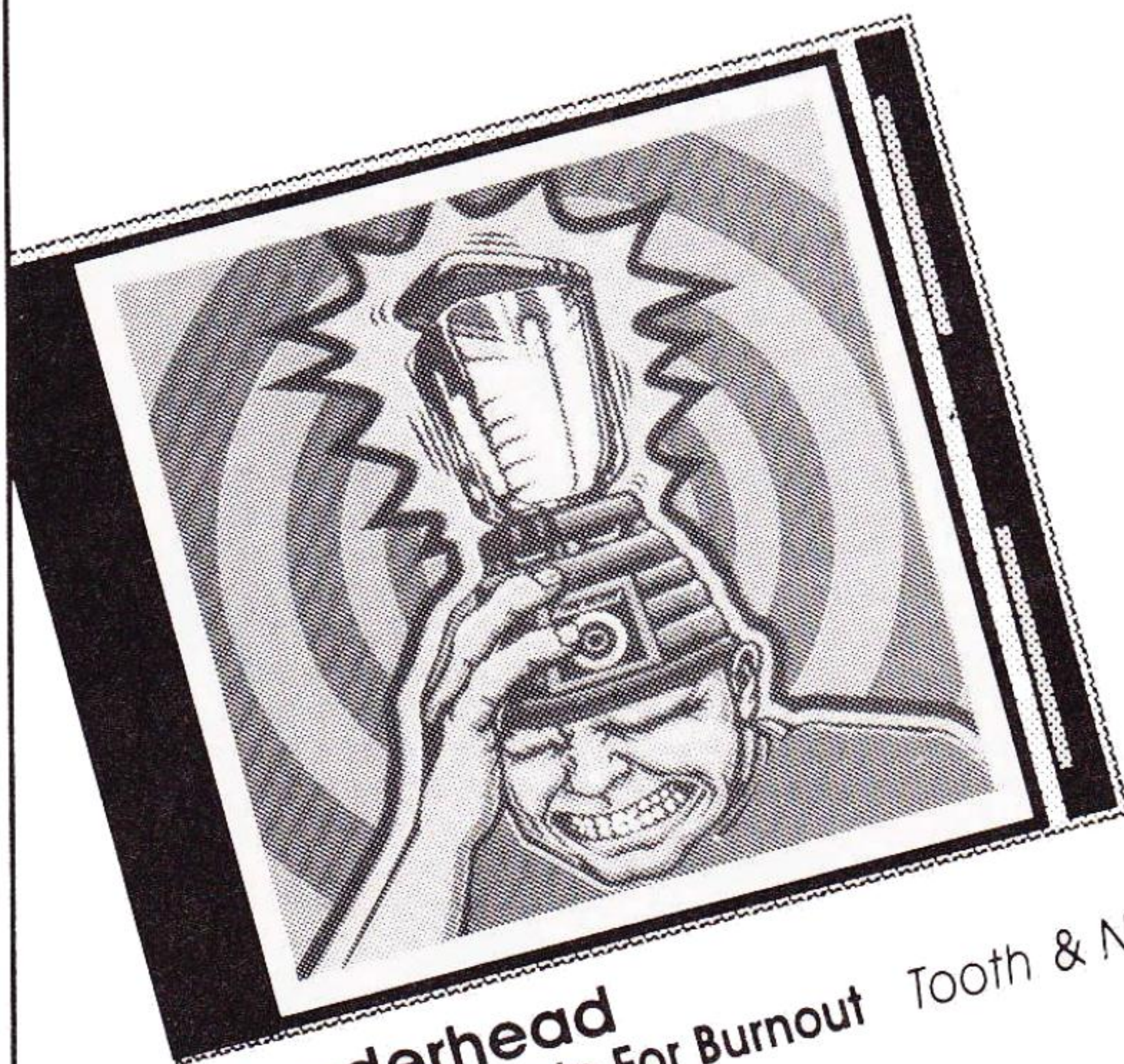
Tourniquet
Vanishing Lessons

Intense



Precious Death
Some New Songs

Metro One



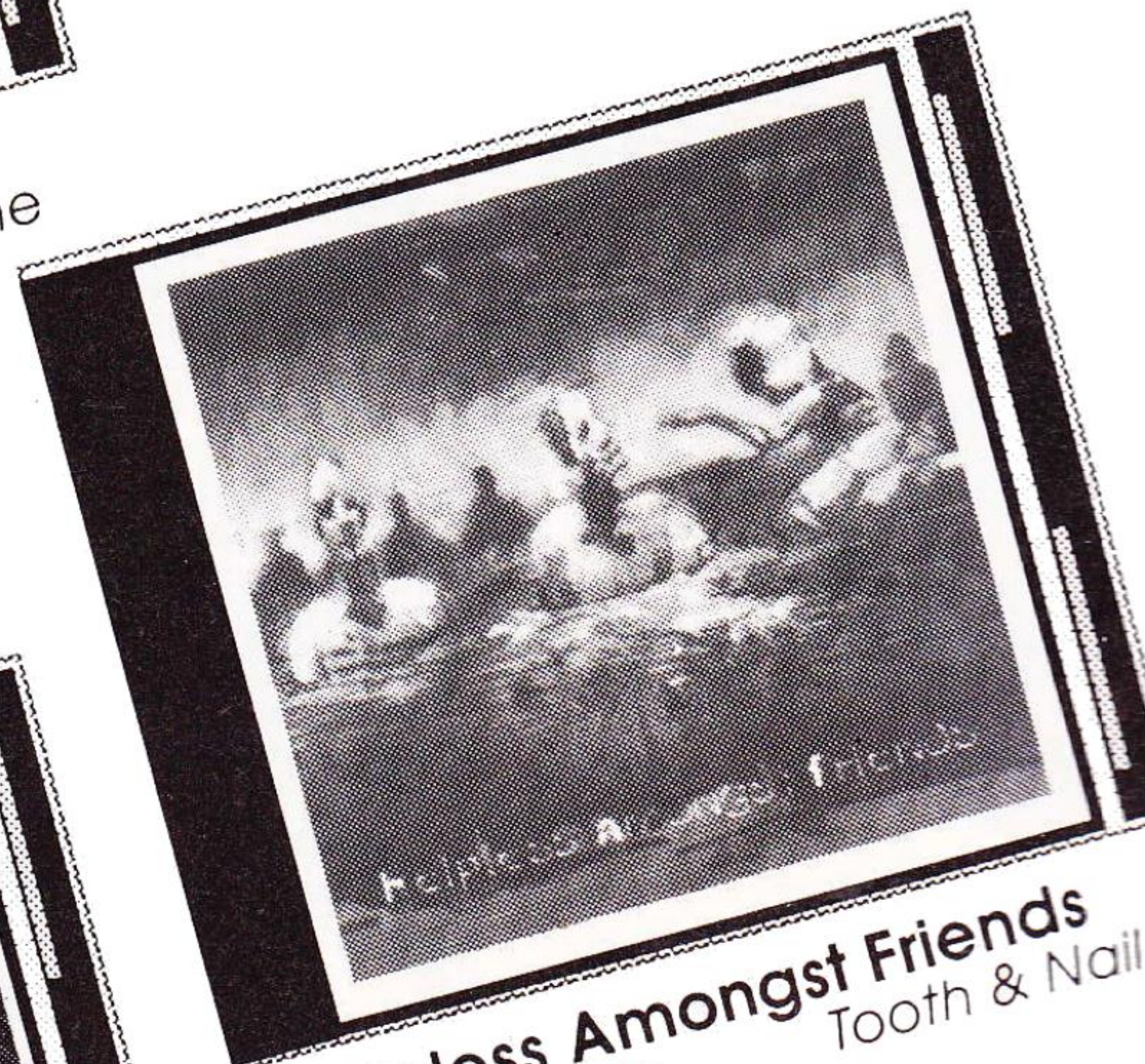
Blenderhead
Prime Candidate For Burnout

Tooth & Nail



Brainchild
Circle Of Dust

Rex



Helpless Amongst Friends
Various Artists

Tooth & Nail

CAMELOT *music*



EARN FREE GIFTS
with Camelot Repeat
Performance

HM Talks to
Brandon Ebel,
founder of Tooth
& Nail Records
and all around
nice guy



**Tooth
& Nail**
RECORDS

Only a year old, Tooth and Nail has become the Christian market's fastest growing new label, and oddly enough, by signing the bands other labels thought weren't mainstream enough. Covering hardcore, punk, indie rock, noise, and industrial, Tooth and Nail has picked up the lost spirit of indie rock (last seen with Blonde Vinyl) and taken it to new heights. Sitting in the Seattle studio where both Soundgarden and Hater have recently recorded, Brandon takes a break from recording Magnified Plaid to answer some tough questions.

What initially inspired you to leave Frontline Records and start your own label?

"First of all, I went to Oregon State University and graduated with a Bachelors of Science in Broadcasting in December of '92. I had been a DJ there for about four and a half years, and I mostly dealt with general market place music. As a result, my vision for a label in the Christian market was different than what everybody else was doing. I'm not saying it's better, just different—more indie run.

I took the job at Frontline just to learn the Christian industry because I'd already learned the general market place by working in radio, being a sales director for the station, and working in programming. I had an opportunity to go work for Virgin Records, but Frontline was a better opportunity both financially and because it was in the Christian market. I knew about Christian music, but I didn't know if it was run any different. I found out how things were run, and then I changed things to the way I wanted to do them."

Without a doubt you've collected a different breed of artists. What term would you use to describe them?

"Punk rock! I mean, that is like the all around term for my label. I have hardcore bands, indie rock bands, a noise pop band—but the whole thing is run with a punk rock attitude. We do a lot of marketing with the label. When you look at a lot of my ads, many times you'll see all the bands together, and it'll say Tooth and Nail Records. I'm marketing my label with the bands—kind of like a family situation. Most labels will try to take one artist and push him over the top, but I'd rather sign who I think is good and try to push them collectively together. I sign my bands to minimal contracts—two and three record deals—so if they want to move on once they're done with Tooth and Nail, they can.

Furthermore, the music is completely current to what's going on in the underground. Hardcore is big in the underground. Even major labels are signing hardcore influenced bands. Rage Against the Machine and Downset both come from those roots. I have Unashamed and Focused, and I also did a hardcore compilation that has sixteen hardcore/punk rock bands.

Punk rock has really made a full circle. In the late seventies/early eighties punk rock was really big, and then pop metal and glam rock came in. Now it's all kind of come back to really raw music, and that's what we do. Besides hardcore, I have Blenderhead, Magnified Plaid, and the Blamed, and they're just straight up punk bands."

Are there any bands you regret signing?

"No. Musically no, for sure. I only sign bands that I like, so even before I record them, I'm not going to regret signing them. Many labels will sign bands because they think, 'This is popular, so let's sign this band now.' If I was doing that, I'd be trying to get more commercial rock bands to sell more records, but that's not what Tooth and Nail's about. Consequently, I've never signed a band I've been disappointed with."

Is it true that you've promoted a tour ethic with your bands?

"I don't sign anybody that's not a real band, meaning they don't play live. If you're going to be on Tooth and Nail, the minimal requirement is that you must play live and do at least one national tour a year (which Tooth and Nail helps them book). So far, I haven't had a problem with it. I have Starflyer, Plank Eye, Wish for Eden, and Focused on national tours. The Blamed and Chatterbox just got off mini-tours. Sometime Sunday, Blenderhead, Magnified Plaid, and Havalina are doing a Fall tour."

What kind of accountability do you require of your bands?

I'm a record company, not a baby sitter. At the same time, they need to be held accountable by somebody. All my bands go to church, I know they're all saved and have personal relationships with Christ, but as far as watching over them, there's only so much I can do. Personally, for the office, we have prayer time every morning at eight o'clock, and I'm having a college Pastor come in and teach a small thirty minute Bible study every Monday to hold all of us accountable in our business practices. As far as the whole label goes, I don't have any set requirements of what the bands can or can't do—I just trust the Holy Spirit will be their guide."

Having just completed your first year as a label, what is your biggest criticism of the Christian industry?

"I question if there's a big drive to sell records on the retail level. A Christian bookstore will sell out of my product, and I'll go in there and ask where it is, and they won't even know they sold out. 'We sold out? I didn't even know we had that. Maybe we should get some more.' Maybe you should.

It's just basic business. You've got people that don't care about music selling music anyway. Don't get me wrong, there are many good bookstores with music buyers that are very current. But there are other stores that aren't. If you went to the general market, ninety-five percent of the stores are all over their business—they're selling records, reordering, marketing, pushing product. In the Christian market, you can make flaps for them to put up in the store, and they'll just throw them away. They're selling books next to punk rock records."

Any final comments?

"I really want people to be able to trust Tooth and Nail Records. When they buy something from Tooth and Nail Records, from the packaging down, I want them to know they're getting a quality project. My records are not budgetville records. I spent a lot of money making quality records. People from other labels have asked me, 'Why do you do twenty-four page booklets, like in Starflyer? It's not very cost effective, and it won't help you sell anymore records.' That might be true, but my customers that buy the project will become more loyal. Even if I don't sell one more record, all the people that bought the first record will come back and buy the next one because they know they can trust Tooth and Nail. It's the goal of Tooth and Nail to make quality a top priority."



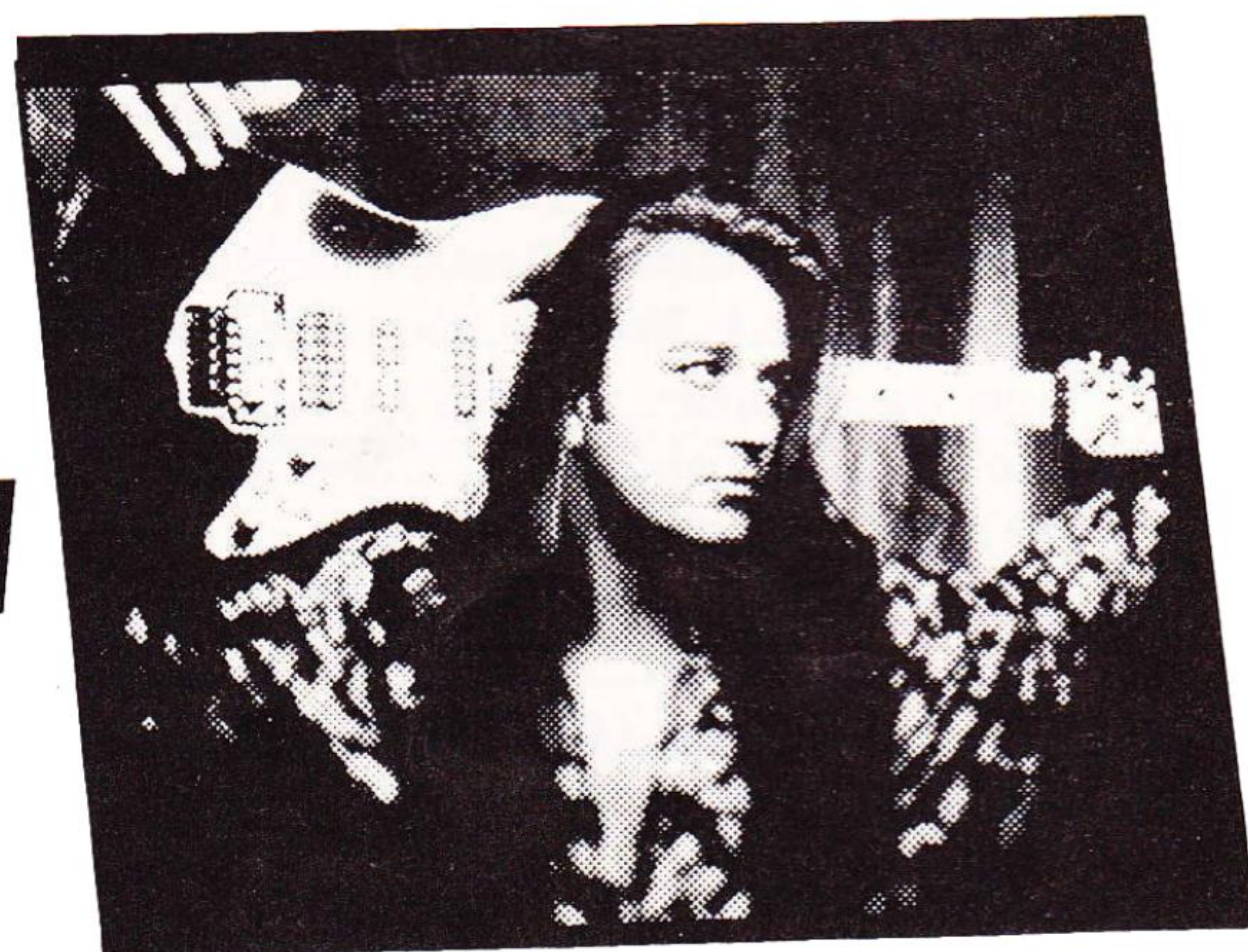
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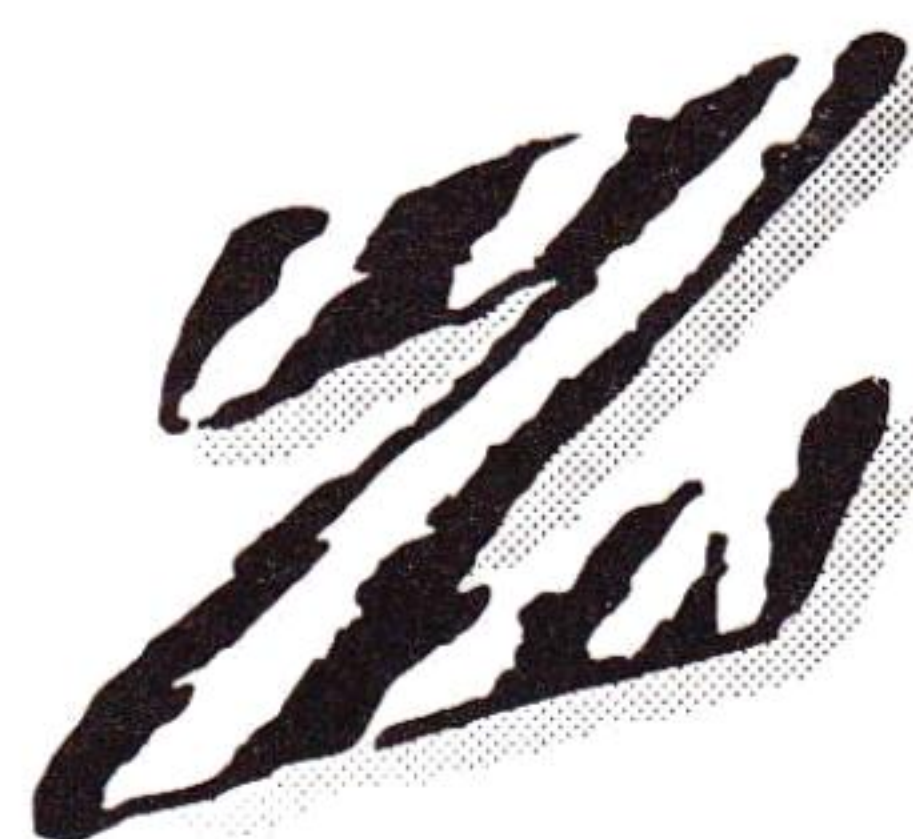
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mortal

SHOWING ITS MORTALITY

Under a quiet circus tent during the last day of Cornerstone '94, Jyro and Jerome, collectively known as Mortal, gave this heartfelt, teary eyed interview to Heaven's Metal writer Randy Rocker, discussing the band's vision, future, and reasons for dissolving the popular industrial group. Though Jyro and Jerome will continue their involvement in music, as producers, their sincere and passionate songs under the Mortal umbrella will be deeply missed.

WHAT DID YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH WHEN YOUR DEBUT, *Lusis*, WAS RELEASED?

"Musically," explains Jyro, "we wanted to push ourselves more. Our jumping off point was the song 'Fisherman.' We wanted to make more songs with that feel. When *Fathom* came out, we got the opportunity to tour a lot more and to speak a lot about Jesus Christ and what's going on in our lives."

"We wanted the music to breathe a little more," adds Jerome.

CAN YOU CAPSULIZED WHY YOU'VE DECIDED TO END MORTAL?

"First of all," states Jerome, "we're going into production more (as Blood), which interests us a lot. As far as Mortal, we feel that, as far as the style of music is, I think we pushed it to its limits. We're not really an industrial band, like Chatterbox or Circle of Dust. It's not like we're leaving the industry. We're getting into production and we'll be behind the scenes."

"I think it was definitely our fault as much as how we were marketed," adds Jyro. "We did come up with an industrial dance record when we first came out, but now that we're getting in touch with what we are, we're finding out that our musical boundaries are much bigger than that genre. It's tough to also want to be true to the people who listen to your music and to give them the music that they want to hear. If they're stuck on a certain style, it's hard to sway 20,000 people and

have them move with you. The other things are a lot more spiritual. We saw so many things that we didn't want to be associated with in the industry, as well as with bands we know. We didn't like the way that we've become, trying to go out there and tour as much as possible to try and sell records. We didn't like to be marketed. We didn't like the hype."

DO YOU FEEL NOW THAT YOU WERE TOO NAIVE BEFORE ENTERING INTO THE BUSINESS?

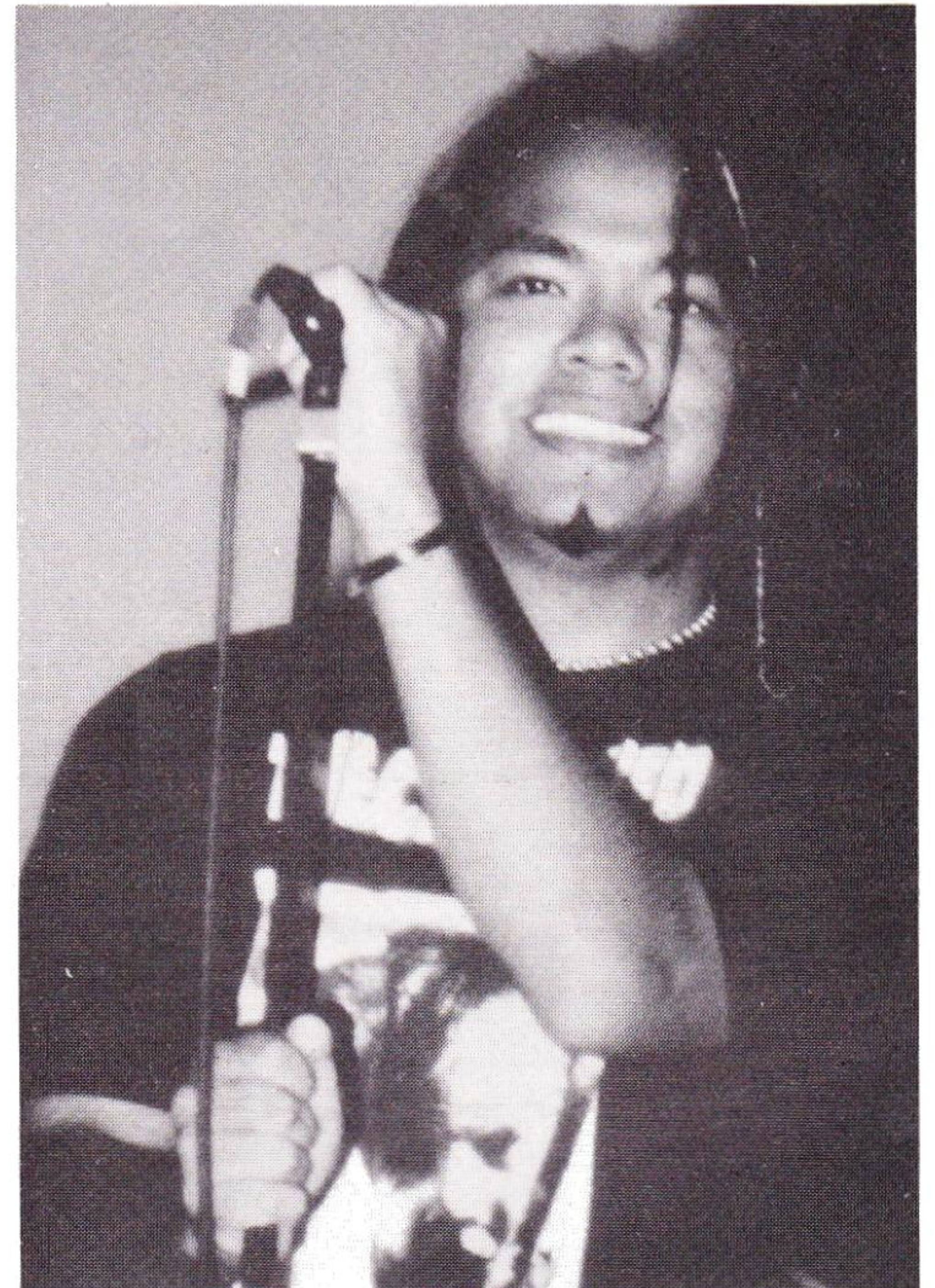
"I think so. It was a wonderland, you know, being signed. You don't know anything about lawyers or contracts. You figure that it's cooler, because it's the Christian music industry and all you have to do is trust people. But, business is business in this world. It will always be. We made some terrible mistakes. Through all of that, we've had some falling out with our record company, but we've come back full circle with them and we've squared things away. They're really catering to our needs recently. Maybe they weren't in the position to do that before, and that's why we went through so much garbage, pain and hurt. But now, maybe they're in the position to help and, even if they're not, they're definitely not, and I appreciate that. As far as Mortal goes, the Lord is saying, 'Be still and know that I'm still your Heavenly Father, your God, and I'm still guiding your way.'"

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO MISS THE MOST?

"Talking to a lot of people," says Jerome. "It's encouraging to talk to a lot of people."

"You get recharged when you talk to people about Jesus Christ," adds Jyro. "No matter what you're going through, if you're talking to someone who needs it even more than you do, the Holy Spirit just likes to jump into those conversations and gets you on the right perspective again."

WAS IT A MUTUAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN BOTH OF YOU TO CEASE MORTAL?



jyro (Photo © Larry Bolen)

"It was immediate," says Jyro. "I believe the Holy Spirit spoke to both of us."

"That was why it wasn't hard to make a decision like that," explains Jerome. "Both of us felt the same way."

DO YOU HAVE ANOTHER BAND PLANNED IN THE BACK OF YOUR MIND?

"We're going into the studio to record the final Mortal album, *Wake*," says Jerome.

"Most of it is going to be songs that we do live, but somehow in the last two years those songs have become something completely different," explains Jyro, "and we want to bring out the live feel that we have in the arrangements. There's going to be at least four new tunes on there. Frontline wants us to do another project in the future, called *Oyster*, which is kind of a more experimental trance and techno project which Jerome is spearheading. I'm probably going to write some songs on there. There's probably going to

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

Mortal cont'd:

be some praise songs on there, which is something we always wanted to do.”

THERE'S GOING TO BE A LOT OF EMOTION IN THE STUDIO.

“It’s definitely going to come out,” says Jyro, “whether or not we try. That’s why we’re going to try to invite as very little people as possible.”

“We’re hoping for a release in October,” says Jerome, “so we’re trying to record in only a month.”

PROVIDING YOUR INSIGHT FROM EXPERIENCE, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A NEW BAND?

“In the last few months,” answers Jyro, “a lot of bands have been coming to us for advice. If you are seeking Christ, and you’re hungry and thirsty for His righteousness, and you’re seeking a godly life, and you’re in a band and all of you are doing the same, you really have nothing to worry about, because you’re already in God’s will. It’s tough to be young and to be offered a contract and to turn it down. It’s tough to have that kind of perspective and I think that everyone’s still going to do it regardless of what anyone tells them, because of the sheer

factor of that it’s human. Especially someone who loves music, that’s in a band, and that has these dreams -- they’re going to do it regardless.”

“Plus,” adds Jerome, “to be in a band and to do music for the Lord is a privilege. God can easily take it away anytime.”

WHAT'S THE ONE THING THAT'S STOOD OUT THE LAST FEW YEARS?

“The friends that we’ve retained the first year,” says Jyro. “Like JPUSA, Circle of Dust, The Crucified guys. Our relationships have never changed and I’m so thankful for those people whose hearts were there to just be friends.”

WHAT'S SOMETHING ELSE THAT YOU WOULD HAVE LIKED TO HAVE ACCOMPLISHED?

“I think,” ponders Jyro, “given one more year we would have gotten to the point where people could relate to us almost automatically. I think there’s a lot of ambiguity because of musical styles. People get alienated because of certain musical styles and I think, given another album and another progression, we might have reached a lot more people than we

have. I wish we could have done another year’s worth of touring just to solidify our friendships -- especially people we’ve met this year.”

WHAT FINAL THING WOULD YOU SAY TO YOUR AUDIENCE?

“These past couple of years we’ve really been encouraged by all the people that wrote us and that have come up to us at the shows,” says Jerome. “That really helped us the past three years.”

“Every story that you’ve told us about the changes in your life and how the music of Mortal has blessed you,” tells Jyro, “as much as it’s meant to you guys, it’s ministered so many times to us. Especially on the road (where) you tell us what a certain song has meant to you...it’s made us try harder to become children of God. It’s really pumped us up and given us so much encouragement that we really don’t know how we can express it. We love everyone’s hearts out there. I want to say that God is a whole lot bigger than the Christian music industry. If you can’t find anything in Christian music that you like, that doesn’t mean that God doesn’t have room for you in His arms. I just want to praise God in remembrance for everyone that we’ve met.”

HM

WhiteCross Cont'd:

YOUR SOLO RECORD. DID THAT PLAY ANY ROLE IN THE SPLIT BETWEEN YOU AND REX?

“I don’t think so, because Rex had been talking about doing a solo album, himself, a year before that. He came to me and asked what I thought about him doing a solo album, and I thought it was great. I don’t know who sparked Word’s interest in me, but it was not me searching after it. They came to me and asked if I could do a solo album.”

DOES THAT DRAIN YOU OF IDEAS FOR FUTURE WHITECROSS ALBUMS?

“No, it’s a totally different outlet musically. Otherwise (lyrically and personally), I don’t know. I’ve only done one solo album. I will not allow my solo work to interfere with touring Whitecross or writing and recording the new release for Whitecross. That’s all in my solo contract. Whitecross is my priority, musically.”

SINCE YOU WROTE MOST OF THE MELODIES FOR THE PREVIOUS ALBUMS, EXPLAIN THE DRASTIC MUSICAL CHANGE IN WHITECROSS.

“It’s a sweet marriage. Rex and I were running out of tricks. We needed fresh ideas. It’s our new guitarist, because it’s a new recipe now. You get somebody with new, fresh ideas working with the same old shoe (me), and you get a new pudding.”

WHERE DID YOU GET YOUR NEW GUITARIST AND BASS PLAYER?

“Barry Graul was recommended by Rick Cua. Tracy Ferrie (ex-Electrik, ex-Seraiah) actually auditioned at the same time Scott Harper did, and when Scott left to play with Michael Sweet, Tracy joined.”

FINAL COMMENTS?

“We’re getting some good feedback on one of our new songs when we play it live. It’s called ‘Goodbye Cruel

World.’ People relate to it, because everyone loses a loved one sooner or later, and it’s a song of hope. My dad died about a month ago, but we didn’t feel the grief that we thought we would feel. We celebrated at a time of sorrow, because we knew he was better off in Heaven. It’s kind of like the scripture, ‘It’s better to be absent from the body and present with the Lord...’ When you realize that, it brings a whole new light to the subject. Even though we miss our dear dad, he’s happier now than he was down here.” After saying this, Scott stops and says, ‘See ya soon, dad.’

“On a different note, I would hope and pray more everyday that your readers would support Christian music. We’re out there to give you the best music we can and we’re able to do that more as you support us with your prayers and by buying our releases. We think God wants to do a new work through us and all of you. If we all work together for God’s kingdom, He can get that accomplished if we’re all in one accord.”

HM

N o r t h e r n

by trevor mcpherson

Hi, my name is Underground, Northwest Underground. Recently a number of my bands have been signed and a bunch more are close, so people may be wondering who I am. Well, that's a little difficult to explain, because I am a fellowship network that sprawls over 4 cities and 2 countries. I encompass 14 bands, 4 zines, 1 paper, 4 Bible studies, 4 community houses, 2 discipleship houses, 1 rescue house, 4 crash pads, 2 ministry coalitions, 1 indie label (2 more in the works), and 5 churches that give me a covering. Let me give you a little tour.

VANCOUVER

General Characteristics: *There seems to be lots of vision and direction, which recently has resulted in the beginning of a Christian fellowship scene, the beginning of a presence on the street and slowly becoming known for few, but great concerts.*

Small Voice Coalition is a group of people who have been working in a number of different areas in order to have a lasting impact in the counter-culture. It is made up of, 1) **Norman Anonymous**, who writes a quarterly zine called White Noise, (with the most recent info and interviews with Christian bands, both local and international), he also has a 2-hour radio show on the local college station and is one of the crash pads for bands that they bring in. 2) **Jason** helps bring in bands as well as heading up a hardcore band with lots of hair, called **Nobody**. 3) **Lance and Paula Spurr** have strong ties to the secular scene. Lance was a biker and Paula a popular DJ on the secular alternative station. They are working on building the Pacific network into a close family through a paper and are a crash pad. 4) **Trevor and Jesse Macpherson** (father & son) and **Gary Youdan** are planting an alternative church called **Blushing Bride**, and are members of **Blush**, a third level spontaneous alternative worship band. Trevor has also been training the groups in Portland and Salem in doing deliverance and spiritual warfare. The eventual goal of Small Voice is to have a multi-purpose center downtown. In one room there would be live bands, another one would be the recording studio of the indie label, there would be a cafe with really cheap food, and a store with local music and radical art and t-



MAGNIFIED PLAID

shirts.

Worldshakers Christian

Growth Center, the mother church that is planting **The Blushing Bride** and the location of the first gigs, is a run-down hall in the seedy part of town with a cool inside. The bands play in one room that has a low ceiling with pipes running across it (when stage diving, you can walk upside down on the ceiling), and then in another part, where the music isn't as loud, there are a pile of couches you can hang out on and talk.

BCF Young People: When Worldshakers got shut down by the Fire Marshall, the young people's group from Burnaby Christian Fellowship took over putting on the gigs. **Paisley Suitcase** is another local band that not only has played in a few of the gigs, but is getting inroads into the secular clubs. **Firefall** is a 10-page paper that focuses on spiritual issues done by Trevor. **Your Friend** is Jesse's zine that focuses on music, issues, growing in Christ, and "neat jokes."

SEATTLE

General Characteristics: *The real strength here is the Christian scene. There are regular and numerous concerts. There are good churches that are involved, as well as Bible studies and community houses. There are also great, cheap food places to go out to after concerts or the next morning for breakfast after a bunch of people from other cities have stayed over.*

Fearless Donkey, which is an indie label started by **Bill and Michelle Powers**, played a big part in getting things started in Seattle. When he began, he did a lot of promoting and booking bands to get a scene happening and, as a result of the bands playing together, a network began to develop. Bill is also the lead singer for

Blenderhead, a fun, spastic hypercore band that is talking about a deal with **Tooth & Nail**. Some of the members in **Blenderhead** also play in **Don't Know**, an Afro-funk-punk hardcore band that will be getting some exposure playing the new band stage at **Cornerstone** this year.

Soulfood is a funky, raucous and roll band that has recently been signed by **Broken**. Members **Daniel** and **Paul**, along with **Nick** from **Poor Old Lu** have one of the community houses. You can go over almost any night and there will be someone to hang out with, and on Tuesday nights Daniel leads a Bible study group that ranges from 10-30 people packed into their living room. They also every so often have a house party where they squeeze a band and about 100 people into their small house. **Poor Old Lu** is another of the recently signed bands. They are on **Frontline**. They have a sound that is hard to classify (smashy groove-adelic?), but are receiving really positive reviews and are another of the bands playing at **Cornerstone**. **Aaron**, one of the members, also does a lot of engineering on some of the other group's records.

House of Seven is a community house (with 7 people, obviously). Most of them are either musicians or artists, and it is the home of **Ton Def Records** and a great place to hang out or crash. Two bands that are new to my scene: **Linus**, which is kind of a reforming of **The Guilty**, is hardcore plus more; and **Magnified Plaid**, a skatey-pop rock band, are both close to signing a deal with **Tooth & Nail**; and **Breeding Lilacs** are a brooding pop folk band that is on hold, looking for the right new members. Many of these band members go to **Calvary Church** and get a lot of support there. Most of the others go to the **University Vineyard** which, along with **Calvary**, are

E x p o s u r e

AARON SPRINKLE OF POOR OLD LU



Photo © Peter Petretia

two of the most common sites for the gigs. Counter Culture is a cool zine by **Chris Estey** that covers the local scene, is full of reviews, poetry and graphic art work and is trying to be salt and light in the counter-culture. A recent community house addition is the **House of Funk** -- oatmeal covered ceiling included, resided mainly with people from Don't Know.

PORTLAND

General Characteristics:

Portland is really strong in the area of having a presence on the street and in the scene, and lots of burden for reaching out. Everything here is intense -- bands, spiritual warfare, attack, outreach, etc., everything. There are some community houses and Bible studies and a real hunger for God.

The Clergy are considered the granddaddy band of the Northwest, and were legitimately the first band signed (with Broken). They have a hard-edged garage band sound and have found a niche in the secular scene, playing quite often in the local clubs and included when the secular punk bands put on all day festivals. They have also just finished a North American tour with Crashdog and Jesus

Freaks, and played on the hardcore stage at Cornerstone this year.

Randy and Chris (drummer and lead singer) also have a community house, which has a wild multi-colored retro paint job (thanks to their live-in artist, April), where young people from the streets or from after shows have been able to come and hang out and crash if they need to.

The other band recently signed is **Sometimes Sunday** (with Tooth & Nail), who blew everyone away at last year's Cornerstone New Band stage. **Mikee** (lead singer) also had a house where people could go and hang out.

Permanent House Guest, a psychedelic rocking band from just across the river in Vancouver, Washington, have a strong following and, as a result of need, they have begun two Bible studies. The final band that has come on the scene is **Encircled**, a heavy hitting death metal, grindcore band.

The Portland Ministry is a coalition with the goal of impacting the streets. **Doug Peterson** is a bridge builder who helped get Small Voice in Vancouver started and has now moved down to this area. He is also a discipler and teacher. **Tom Gilbert** is a Baptist pastor with a strong prophetic gift who heads up the team. **Gary Lee** is an old Jesus person, cross carrying, street evangelist with a big heart who rounds out the team.

The people who live in **Street Evangelism Community**

House, Lance, Steve, Eric, and Danielle, have a real heart for the people on the street and are effective at reaching them. They often have people sleeping on their floor and are great musicians. The key church that a lot of the alternative people are relating to is **Summit**. One of their house groups is almost all alternative. The pastor and wife, **Dan and Jodi**, are really great. Thief in the Night is a zine done by **Caleb**, with lots of music and reviews. **The Corral** is the main Christian venue. In this city, the Christian bands probably play more in the secular clubs than they do in Christian venues.

SALEM

General Characteristics: *Salem is strong in the area of rescue and discipleship houses, and outreach on the streets. It is a good place to go get healing and help. Already some people from Portland have gone down and moved into one of the discipleship houses.*

Our Father's House is a recent church plant that includes a number of cell groups, 2 discipleship houses, and a rescue house. The pastor, **John Cook**, is a good teacher and a missions specialist, and has a real heart for the poor and needy and street kids. Working along with him is **Daniel Markkoya**, a prophetic, singing evangelist (Keith Green style). The main band from the area is **Crux**, a hard edged punk rawk band, which came out of the break-up of **Empty Tomb**. There is also a band named **Jude**, a folk rock with an edge that is hoping to get back together again.

So, there's your tour of the Northwest. Now, don't act like a stranger!
HM



SOULFOOD HOUSE BIBLE STUDY

HARD



MAIN-STREAM HARDCORE BANDS?

Mark answers, "Minor Threat, Bad Religion, Bad Brains, Black Flag, Youth of Today, 7 Seconds, DRI, GBH. In terms of the resurgence of hardcore with all these new bands, I can't really stomach half of them -- most are just playing the same song over and over again. I don't know if it's just old school-type prejudice, but I'm not into any of these newer groups."

WHAT ARE THE BEGINNINGS OF OLD SCHOOL HARDCORE?

"Punk rock was the beginning of hardcore," says Mark. "Bands like The Germs, X, The Ramones, and I would say The Sex Pistols, but I hate them and don't want to give them any credit. You know what I mean, though, the punk bands from a long time ago -- that was the beginning of hardcore music."

IT SEEMS THE STRONGEST HARDCORE MOVEMENT BEGAN WITH IAN MACKAYE AND THE STRAIGHT EDGE SCENE. WHAT'S THE

STORY BEHIND THIS?

Tim Mann (known also as the Professor of Straight Edge) remarks, "Straight edge started in the early eighties with icon Ian Mackaye of Minor Threat (now frontman for Fugazi). Ian was a punk rocker who didn't want to party, drink or do drugs, and fought against it. Back then, if a punk show was at a bar, anyone under age was marked with a big black X on his hand. The kids who decided to fight against drugs and alcohol put X's on their hands to show they were straight edge. In those days, straight-edge was anti-drug, alcohol, and sex, but now it's gotten into vegetarian, homosexuality, and abortion rights -- very politically correct. There are still old school straight edge kids, but now there's this emerging new school. Some of the guys in Focused are actually vegetarians, but don't misunderstand, it's because of health reasons. And, for me, I live my life straight because my body's the temple of the Holy Spirit."

Mark adds, "Ian was actually not the first person to speak like he does. There was a band called SSD that lived the whole straight edge thing, but there wasn't much of a vibe as there was with Ian, because Minor Threat was so much better of a band."

EVEN WITH MAINSTREAM HARDCORE, THERE SEEMS TO ALWAYS BE A MESSAGE. HOW COME?

"You're not really doing anything for anyone if you don't have some kind of message," states Mark, "even if the message is to rebel. Some people say, 'We don't have a message. We don't think it's important.' But that's a message in itself."

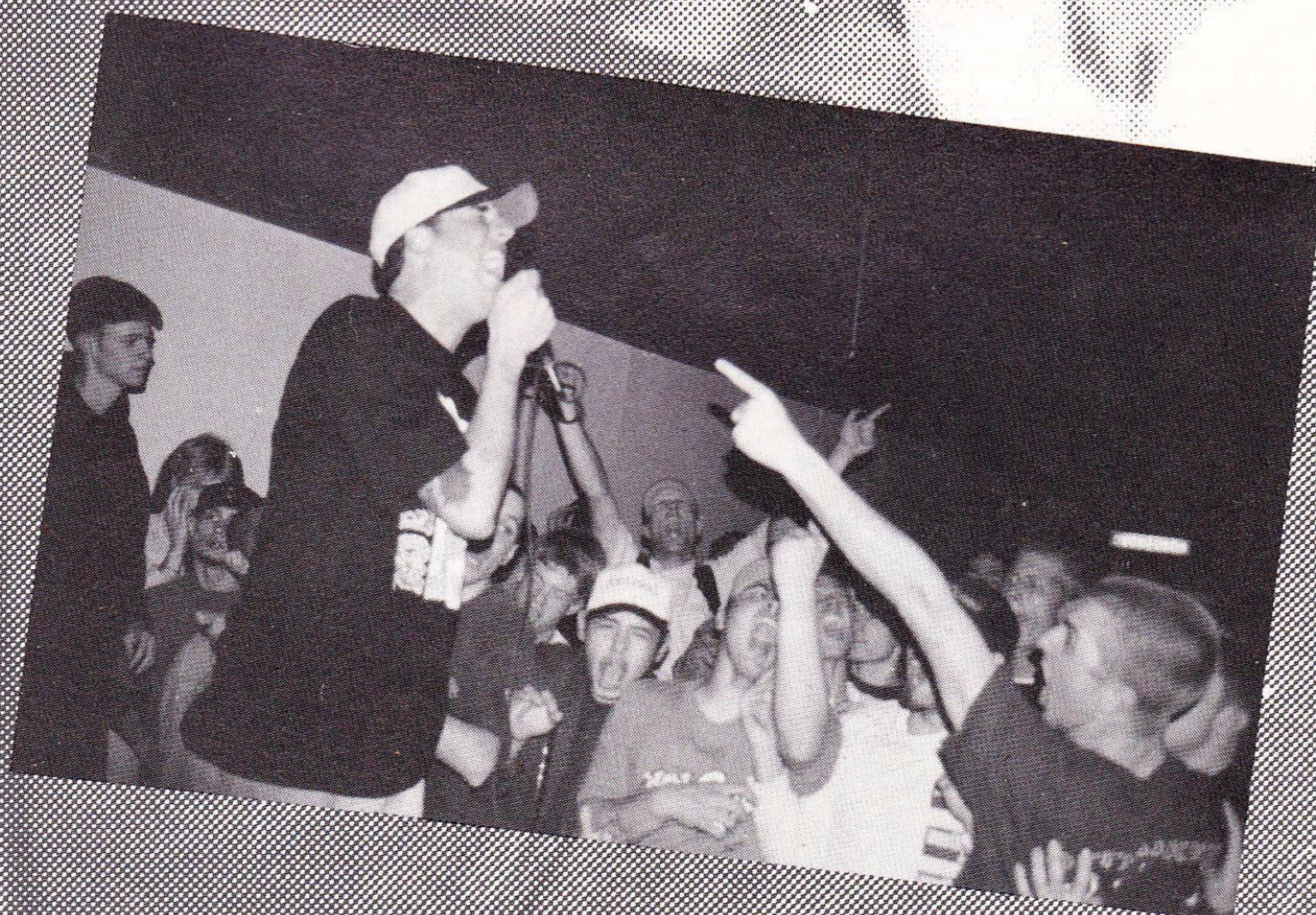
The term **hardcore** has been frequently used in CCM of late, yet few people seem to really understand what it's all about. With a history going back to the beginnings of punk rock itself, the CCM market only first heard hardcore with the now defunct band The Crucified, who were literally the spearhead that broke the **scene** open. Yet The Crucified is not all there is to say about Christian hardcore.

With the recent hardcore punk revival, many secular bands have attracted the attention of such major labels as Warner Brothers, Atlantic, and Polygram. Furthermore, pioneer punk labels like Epitaph Records are growing at an amazing rate. With less lag time than usual, the Christian market has already begun a strong scene itself with such bands as Focused, Six Feet Deep, Unashamed, the Blinded, P.O.D., and Crashdog. To help the newly initiated find their bearings in the hardcore scene, Heaven's Metal writer David Jenison spoke with four of CCM hardcore's pioneers: Mark Salomon (The Crucified vocalist), Tim Mann (Focused vocalist), Myk (Six Feet Deep vocalist), and Brandon Ebel (Tooth & Nail owner/Bar Mitzvah vocalist) -- and the lesson went something like this...

IF A CHURCH KID WHO'S NEVER HEARD HARDCORE ASKED FOR A DESCRIPTION, HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER HIM?

Brandon responds, "Hardcore happens when thrash meets punk rock, yet it's all about heart." Myk adds, "The music is really stripped down and raw, and so is the message."

SIMPLE ENOUGH. WHO WOULD BE THE SEMINAL



TIM MANN

"Punk rock meant you didn't need to have some creed to follow, but hardcore generally has a prevailing sense of purpose, and I believe that's what turns many young kids on to it. There's usually some kind of movement being preached, as opposed to just sitting around and doing drugs or doing what you've always been told to do."

Myk adds, "In the secular scene, there is so much anger and violence. It's important for the Christian kids to see past that and understand that hardcore isn't about violence, but about what you really feel inside. Hardcore from the beginning has always been about speaking your mind and your heart, no matter what you're into. As Christian hardcore bands, we can just go into the scene and speak our minds and speak freely about the Lord."

WHAT KIND OF AN IMPACT DO YOU SEE CHRISTIAN HARDCORE MAKING?

"It seems like with the hardcore bands popping up in the Christian scene," begins Myk, "we have to sit back and see what happens. People are going to dig it or not. Personally, from what I saw at Cornerstone, it seems like hardcore is going to really do well."

"In Southern California," says Brandon, "the Christian hardcore movement is very large, but it's really mixed in. It's not too different from the general market. If you go to a Focused show, half the crowd are just regular kids. In fact, I just bought Downset's new album, and they thank Tim and Focused right next to Biohazard. The reason they thanked Focused was because they played shows together before Downset got signed to Polygram. Focused is also playing shows with Snapcase, Earth Crisis, and possibly even Stompx. Really, I don't know if there is a huge CCM scene, but there is a huge general market scene, and many of the Christian bands are being accepted like any other band. I guess a Christian scene seems to be starting. Many of the kids that are into thrash and heavy metal are getting into hardcore, even if they're not involved in the scene."

HOW HAVE MOST OF THE REGULAR KIDS RESPONDED TO CHRISTIAN HARDCORE?

"It varies," says Myk. "Some kids get into the music because they dig it, others won't take a chance to hear the music, because they don't want to hear what we have to say, and then other kids are totally serious about what we're talking about. I think I can say we've experienced

every kind of attitude we could have possibly run into."

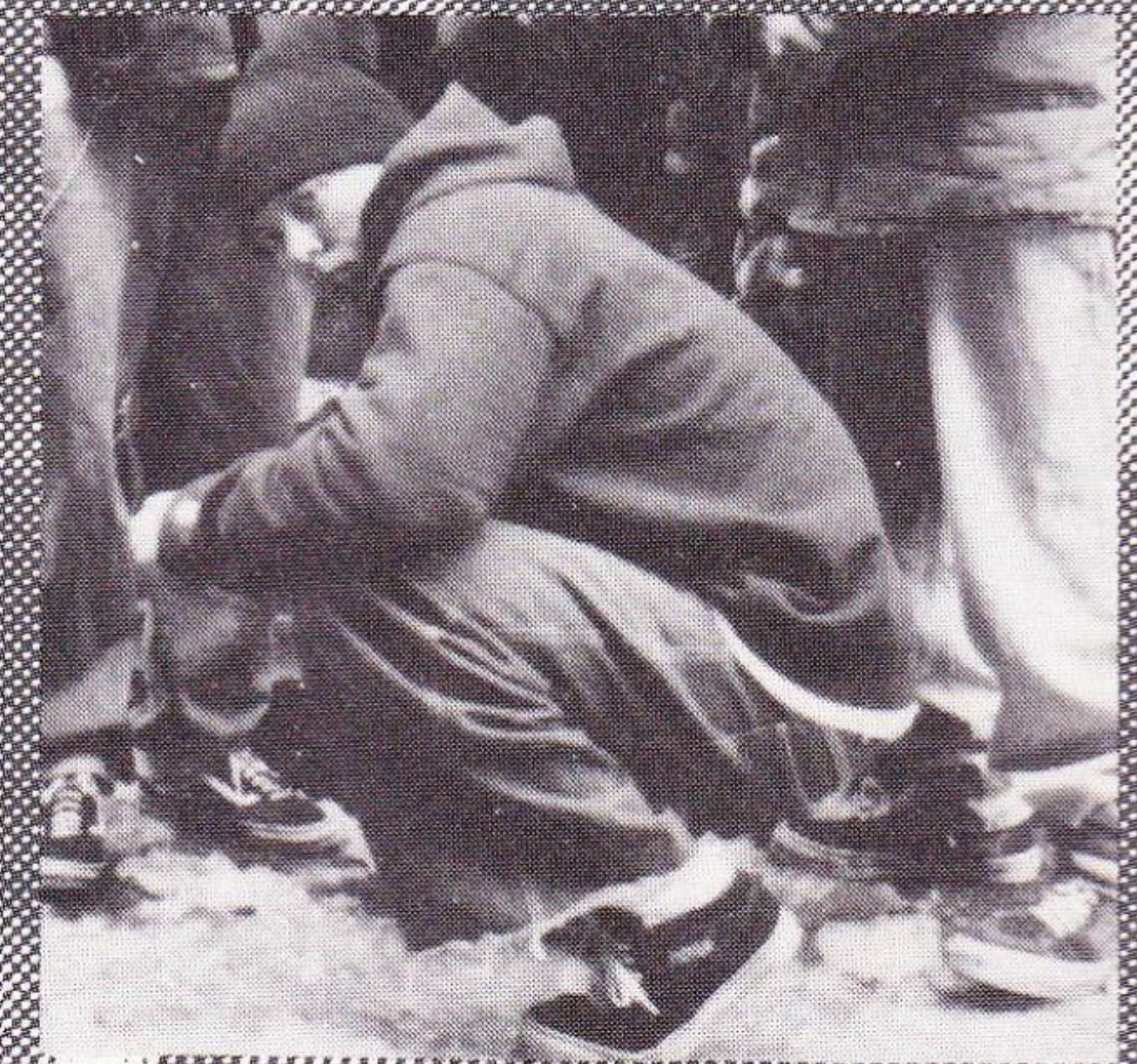
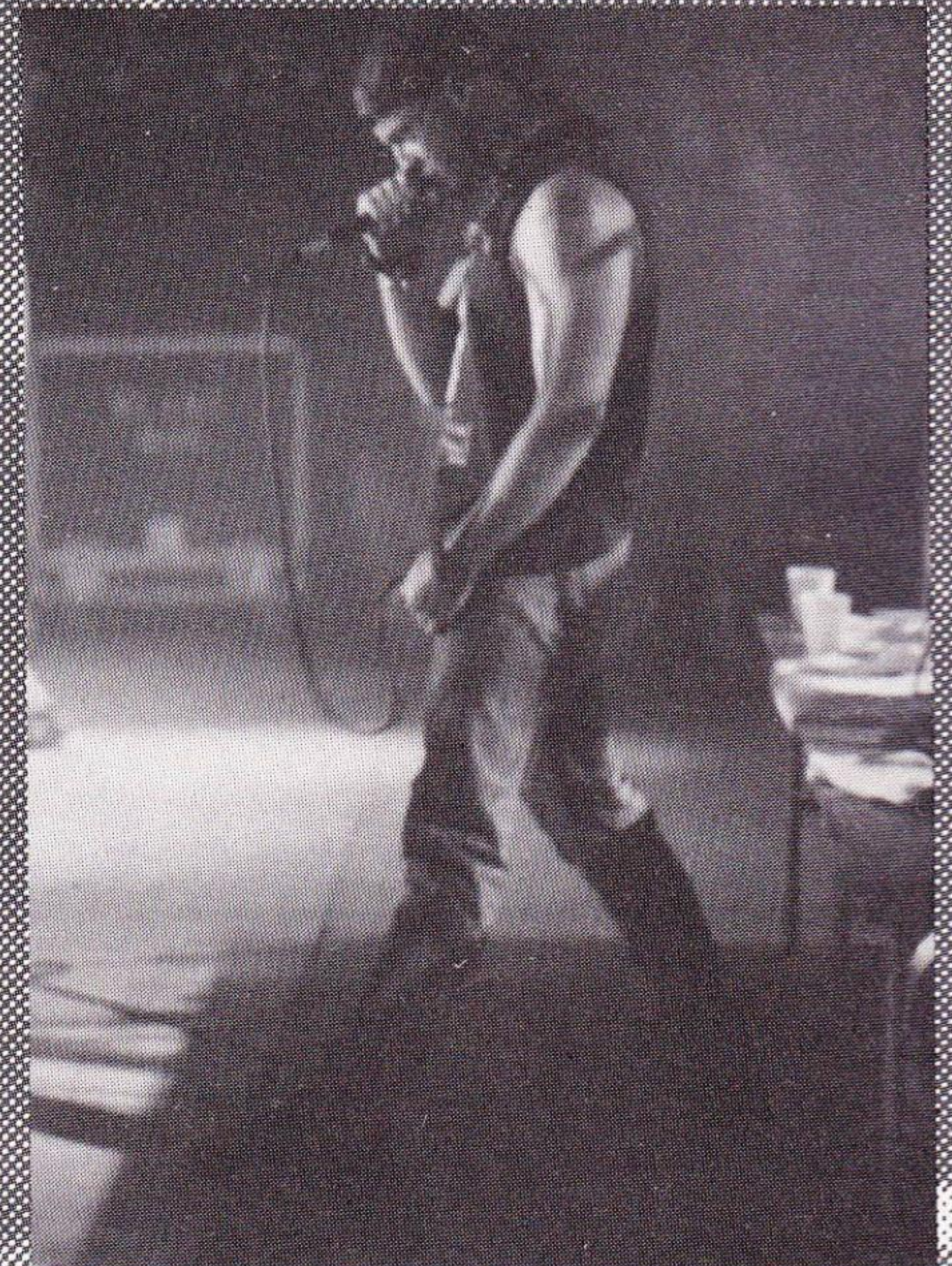
Mark adds, "Most of them say, 'It's good for you, but it's not my thing,' or 'What works for you, works for you, and what works for me, works for me.' It's the same thing they're saying now, and the same thing people have been saying about Christianity through the ages. They are generally respectful to a certain degree, but there's always the drunk fool. The majority of the people claim to have an open mind, so they'd look pretty bad in sit there and bag on someone for speaking what they believe."

"You know what, though, we played hardcore in our hometown for years, but we never got put on a local hardcore compilation. It's like, if they disagree with your message, they just don't include you. It's like blackbailing a person. We were pretty much never accepted, and that was fine with me."

Tim concludes, "Many of the secular hardcore kids say singing Christian lyrics and playing hardcore is a fallacy. It's not punk rock or hardcore. But the whole idea behind hardcore is to speak your mind in your music and on stage about what really means something to you in your heart. If they can raise their fist for vegetarianism or homosexuality, then I can do the same about God."

Bands like Focused and Six Feet Deep are offering excellent alternatives to the many classic and up-'n'-coming hardcore bands in the general market. Bands like Crashdog are even offering something for the more old school punker. The only punk hardcore style not yet tapped into, though the Blamed does to a point, would be the harmonized surf punk of bands like Pennywise or Offspring (with their influences coming from Bad Religion). Yet, on the other hand, the movement has just begun.

HM





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Understanding The Blues

By Dan MacIntosh

The term blues conjures up different images for almost everybody. For some, it may describe Blind Willie Johnson with an acoustic guitar, singing "Nobody's Fault But Mine," while, for others, it may represent Led Zeppelin doing a blazing guitar rendition of that very same song. Still others might get the picture of Stevie Ray Vaughan with his Hendrix inspired guitar slinging, or maybe Jimmy Reed singing about "Bright Lights, Bright City." And, just like they told you in school, there are no wrong answers here. All of these are members of the family of the blues.

Folks may have invented countless variations, but, as Glenn Kaiser sings in his powerful new electrified blues album, *Spontaneous Combustion*, "You can see it in their faces/Down to the holes in their shoes/There ain't no doubt about it/Everybody understands the blues." This song also points out that the blues crosses all racial and economic boundaries. "Black an' white/Brown an' yellow/Red man too/Regardless of their wallet/Sometime they win/sometimes they lose/Only one thing for certain/Everybody understands the blues."

Kaiser, who lives in Chicago, where people like Muddy Waters made the urban style of blues famous, is someone who knows not only what it's like to have the blues, but with two acoustic blues collaborations with Darrell Mansfield under his belt in addition to this latest "plugged-in" project, he is one who also understands how to play the blues. It was the sincerity of the blues which first attracted Kaiser to the music, as well as the apparent insincerity of pop music in the early and middle part of the Sixties. "I quit listening to pop radio," recalls Kaiser, "because I didn't believe the singers themselves believed what they were singing. There was an all black station right where I lived, which was West Alice, Wisconsin (a working class suburb of Milwaukee), and somebody said, 'Hey, you oughta check this one out.' You know, I had some friends that were into rhythm & blues. It was all blues, and rhythm & blues, and that sort of thing, and I loved it, because it sounded true to me. It sounded real."

In addition to appreciating the "reality" which came through in the blues music he was listening to, Kaiser could also relate to some of the financial struggles that blues singers sang about. His family was on welfare for a time. They were forced to use food stamps, and his parents eventually were di-



vorced. "Looking back, though, I didn't think very much about it at the time. There were a lot of things that I had very much in common with those making music and selling blues records of the day."

Sadly, the same accusation about the insincerity of the pop music in the Sixties can be made about much of what is presented as Christian music today. Kaiser partly blames the commercial pressures within the Christian recording industry for much of the unconvincing music that gets made these days. "They say to themselves, 'Yes, we want the Gospel to come across,' or, 'We want a Biblical world view,' or, 'We want to write honest songs, but we also want to make a living. We know what the market will bear,' or, 'We have a sense of what our label, or somebody in Nashville wants. So, that's how we write lyrics.' Well, of course, no blues player worth the powder to blow them up hardly even thinks about those things."

"Some songs, and some vocals, and some delivery," explains Kaiser when trying to describe the music that touches his heart. "Sounds like the person's heart is coming right out of their mouth. There's a real genuine, gut level, 'this is for real, I mean it, I feel it, this is how I think and this is Who Jesus is' quality. It's like an actor when you're watching a movie, where you don't even think about the actor playing the part until the very end of the movie. You were crying, and you were so moved, and this person did their job so well, that you were drawn into their character, and you were just absolutely blown away. Now, were they acting? Yeah, they were performing, but they

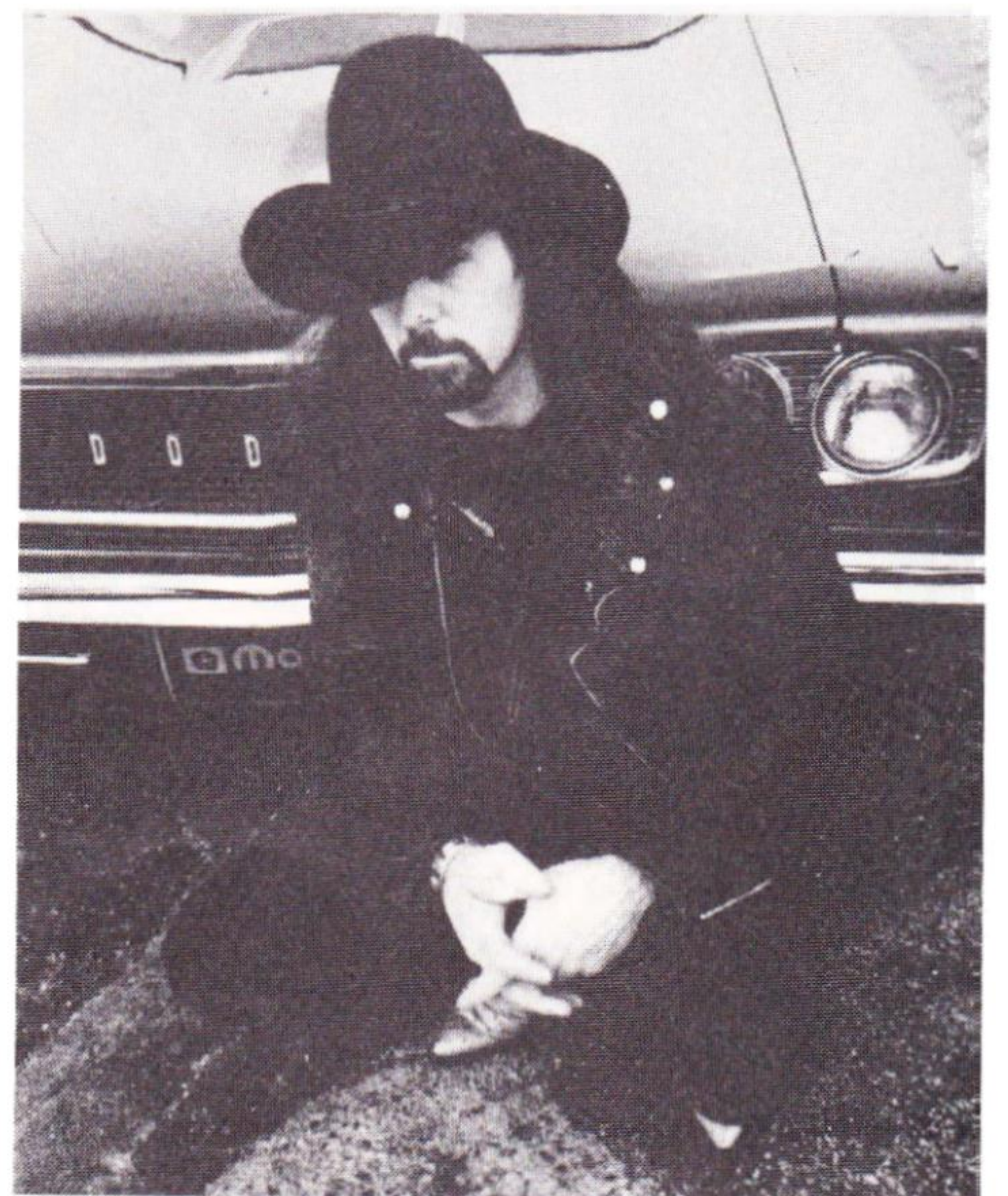
put themselves so much into their part that they really became the character they were portraying. That's the kind of thing that I'm talking about in music and lyrics."

It's reached a point, in Kaiser's opinion, that Christian musicians who are truly inspired, like the blues greats of the past, or the kind of actor that Kaiser talks about, are like fish out of water in the Christian music business, where they really ought to be the norm. "People who don't play the game, and don't write to get airplay as such, who are really trying to write honest music, I think they scare the life out of people."

The blues greats of the past were not afraid to sing about life and death issues. "When death comes slippin' in the room," sang Blind Willie Johnson (and reproduced by Kaiser/Mansfield on *Slow Burn*), "You're gonna need somebody on your bond." Certainly, Blind Willie Johnson's sins scared the life out of him. If he chose his own way instead of the Lord's, he sang it'd be "Nobody's fault but mine," and living without God is the true meaning of the blues.

Kaiser, with his blues albums, his preaching, his work with Rez, and with almost any vocal which proceeds from his raspy voice, knows how to capture that "life and death" urgency of the blues. And when that happens, it's *Spontaneous Combustion* indeed...

In much of the great spiritually inspired blues music, such as that of people like Blind Willie Johnson, there is the clearly stated belief on the part of the artist that the Almighty God is always there and watching. Unlike much of the modern talk about a God Who exists way out beyond the moon and the



Left: GLENN; Right: GREG

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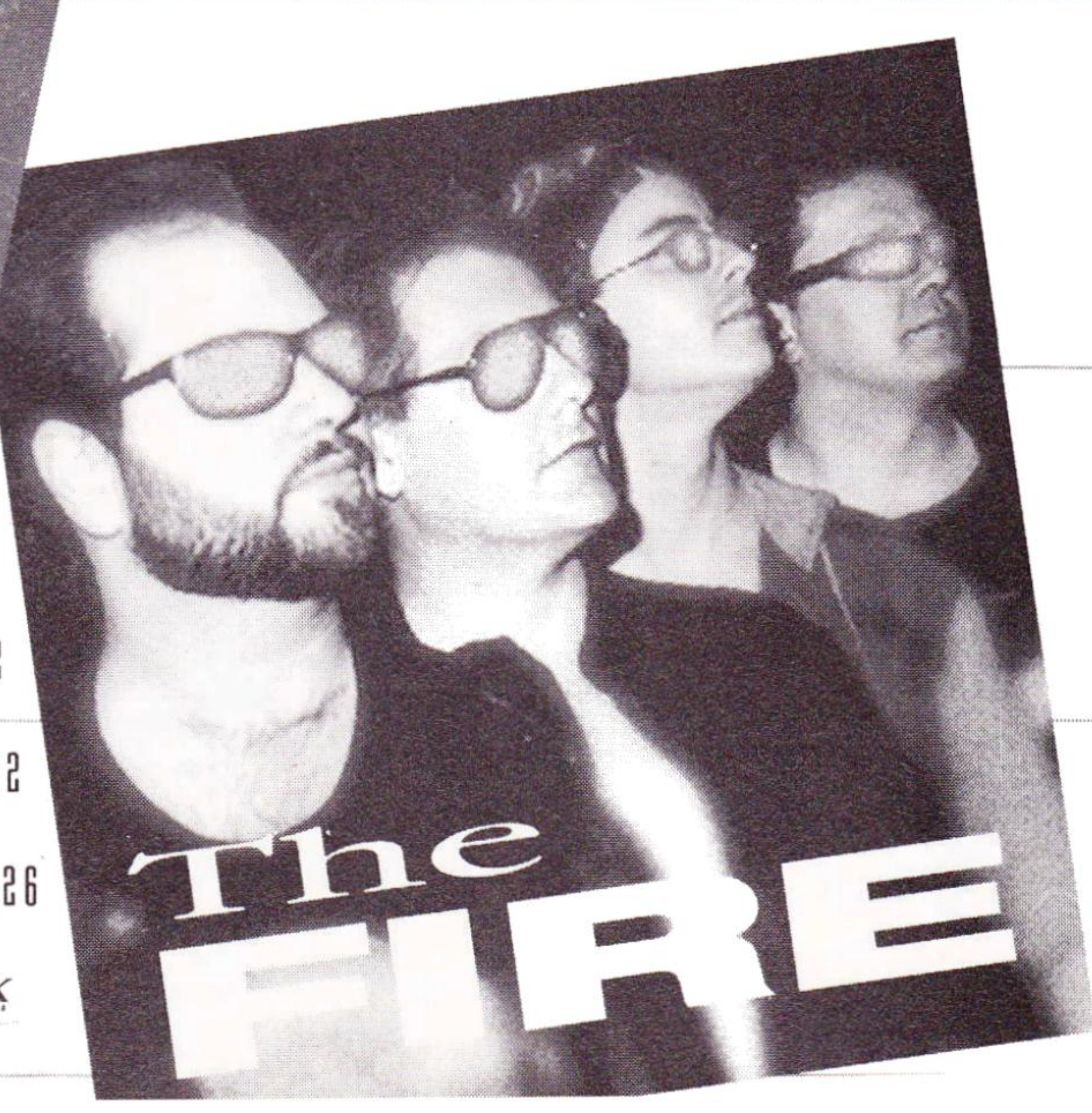
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ATOMIC RECORDS



stars, some blues make you feel like God is in the room in the chair right next to you. For Greg Chaisson, who recorded successful records in the secular realm with the group Badlands, as well as getting Christian music recognition with Die Happy, his first solo blues oriented release, *It's About Time*, is centered upon an experience where Chaisson had a direct encounter with his God.

"One night I heard a voice in my room when I was sleeping," remembers Chaisson. "I woke up, and I could still hear the voice talking to me. This is what the song, 'My Dark Ride,' on the album is all about. And the voice was saying all these things to me, and I was sitting up wide awake. The voice wasn't in my head, I could actually hear the voice like it was next to me, but it wasn't my wife, because she was asleep. It was about three o'clock in the morning. The voice was telling me that you can't judge all Christians by the bad ones you've seen." This refers back to Chaisson's experiences with the group Die Happy, who, as a band, didn't exactly die a happy death, and made Chaisson's first experience with Christians in the Christian music scene much less than a happy one.

"You can't worry about all the things that people do to you," the voice continued. "You have to worry about your own life. You have to have your own belief in God. And if you know what you've been doing is wrong, then why are you doing it? Do the things that you believe in."

"I couldn't even handle it," Chaisson continues, "it was so intense. I said, 'I have to go back to sleep,' and when I did, then I could hear the voice in my dreams. It told me a ton of things, all of which related to what my relationship with God should be. And when I woke up the next day, I wasn't ticked off anymore. And I didn't have any of the negative feelings, and I wasn't mad at the Die Happy guys. It was like that part was over, and now this part was going to start, and this is the way I'll be from here on out."

Chaisson believes he had this experience because God felt he needed it. "I think God came to me, because I was so distressed, and talked to me, and told me the things I needed to hear." The album, *It's About Time*, reflects the dialogue which goes on between rebellious men and a loving God. It was time for Chaisson to face facts, and it was also time for Chaisson to make a musical statement which would reveal to the world the changes God was making in his heart.

Coincidentally, the Kaiser/Mansfield projects helped to convince

Chaisson that he, too, could record a similar kind of thing. "When I was in Die Happy," recalls Chaisson, "one of the guys in the band had one of Kaiser/Mansfield albums. I was listening to it and I thought, 'Wow, how many other bands are doing this?' And the guy said,

'Well, this is really one of the only ones.' I didn't want to do exactly the kind of thing they were doing, because they were doing it. I thought, 'Well gosh, if they can do this, then maybe I can do like this early 70's style, blues rock type thing similar to ZZ Top or Point Blank, and make it a Christian format.'"

The influence of the blues can be seen in the music of artists like Glenn Kaiser, who

put their fingerprint on the styles which preceded them, as it can be recognized in the harder rock forms that Greg Chaisson appreciates so much. Sometimes that influence may come through in the soulfulness and passion of the singing, as it does in the music of Chris Lizotte.

"I always get reviews of people calling me a blues artist," laughs Lizotte. "But I don't think of myself as a traditional blues artist. I would call my style folk rock & roll with blues influence." When pointing to people who made an impression on him musically, Lizotte mentions those who are not strictly blues singers, though there are strong doses of blues in their respective repertoire. "I like Ray Charles, and I do like Van Morrison a lot."

It's also refreshing to hear an artist like Lizotte, whose music is raw and earthy, speak about the importance of ministry. "I got saved out of playing secular clubs," states Lizotte. "The whole thing that attracted me to Christian music wasn't just to be an entertainer. I really enjoy giving altar calls, or praying for people after the concerts. Even though I don't feel deserving of being called a music minister, I feel like that's what God's giving me to do."

Lizotte has just as much passion for being a father as he does for his music. His previous album was dedicated to his son, Dana, and his latest album *Long Time Comin'* is dedicated to his second son, Lee. "God shows you a lot about His heart for us when you're a parent. His unending love, and His unconditional love... Your little boy could

knock a hole in your windshield or something, and you'd still love the heck out of him. It's just like us, because when we blow it, I know God has so much mercy for us, because we're His kids."

Raymond McDonald, who recorded his solo album, *Under The Mighty Blood*, under the name "Sleepy Ray," is also Chris Lizotte's guitarist, and receives the highest praise from Chris for his contributions. "I think he has a really good feel," says Lizotte. "It just kind of ties everything together." And while McDonald is a true team player on Lizotte's records, his playing, which is of the Texas variety most commonly associated with the late Stevie Ray Vaughan, really comes to the forefront and shines on his first solo outing.

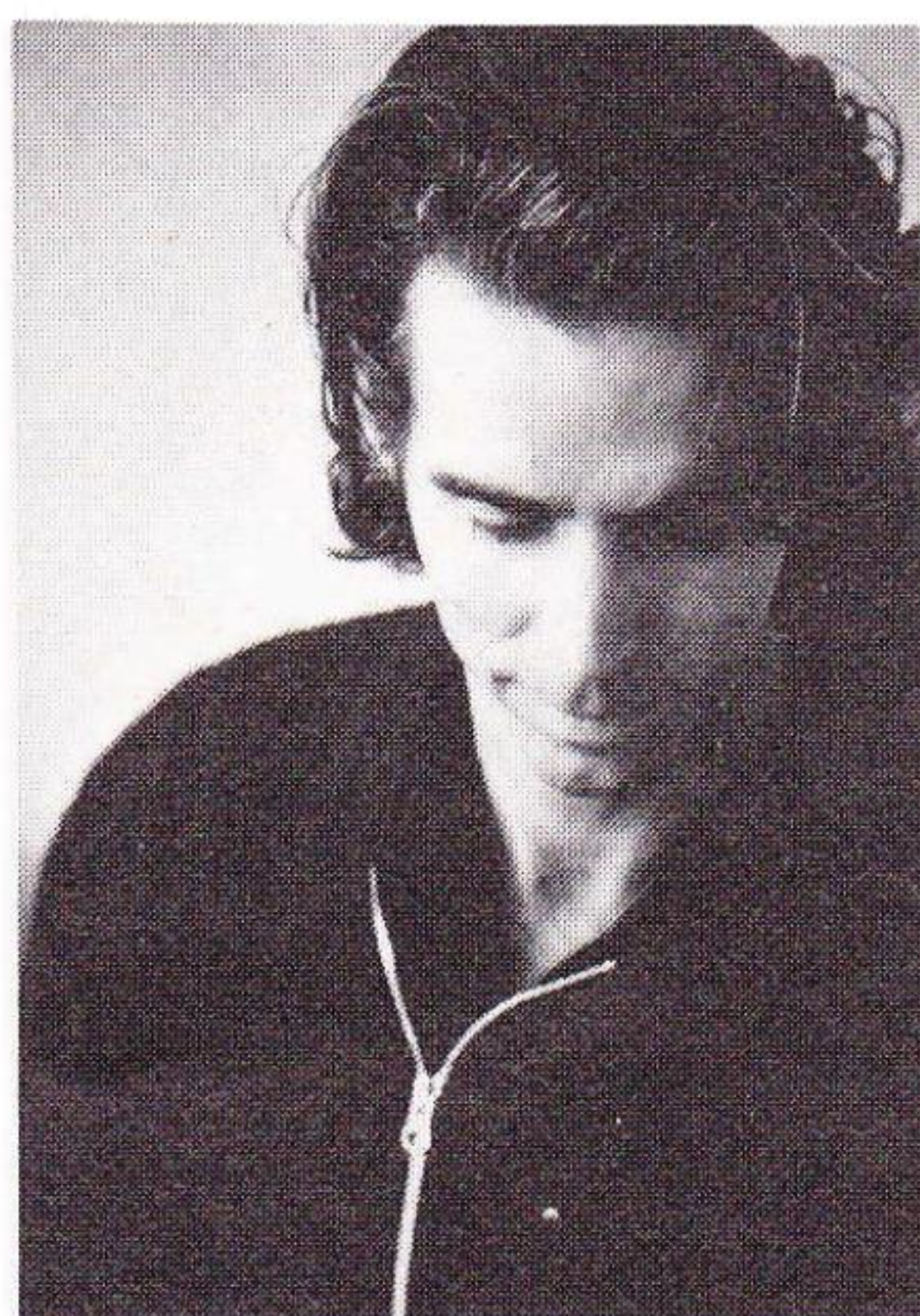
Unlike Glenn Kaiser or Greg Chaisson, Ray wasn't one of these guys who was attracted to blues music later in life. Much like many Gospel singers who are raised on the stuff, Ray has been playing the blues since childhood. "We would get together as kids, and we all played the guitar, and we would sit back in a little shed that was on my uncle's property, and we would play the blues literally until the sun came up."

In the South, where Ray grew up, blues players weren't held in high esteem by the Southern Baptist church that he belonged to. "They told me I was going to Hell if I didn't quit playing that stuff. So, I did. I decided I was gonna be a preacher, since that's the closest thing to playing the blues that you can do, because half the blues players were preachers anyhow."

Needless to say, Ray never gave up the blues completely. His life journey led him from his home in Texas to the clubs of Los Angeles, where he met a fellow "Christian in name only" believer named Chris Lizotte, who was also trying to make it in the secular music world. Lizotte invited him to church after they'd met by coincidence while both were working as clerks at the same greeting card store. This led to their eventual musical collaboration, as they both also returned to their first love, which helped them to get beyond their own personal blues.

The story of the blues is made up of smaller stories like these individuals you've just read about. Each in their own way has an understanding of the blues. Each also has a unique way of expressing that understanding, so that, if you choose to neglect these stories, you're missing out on tales well told, and it will be nobody's fault but yours.

HM

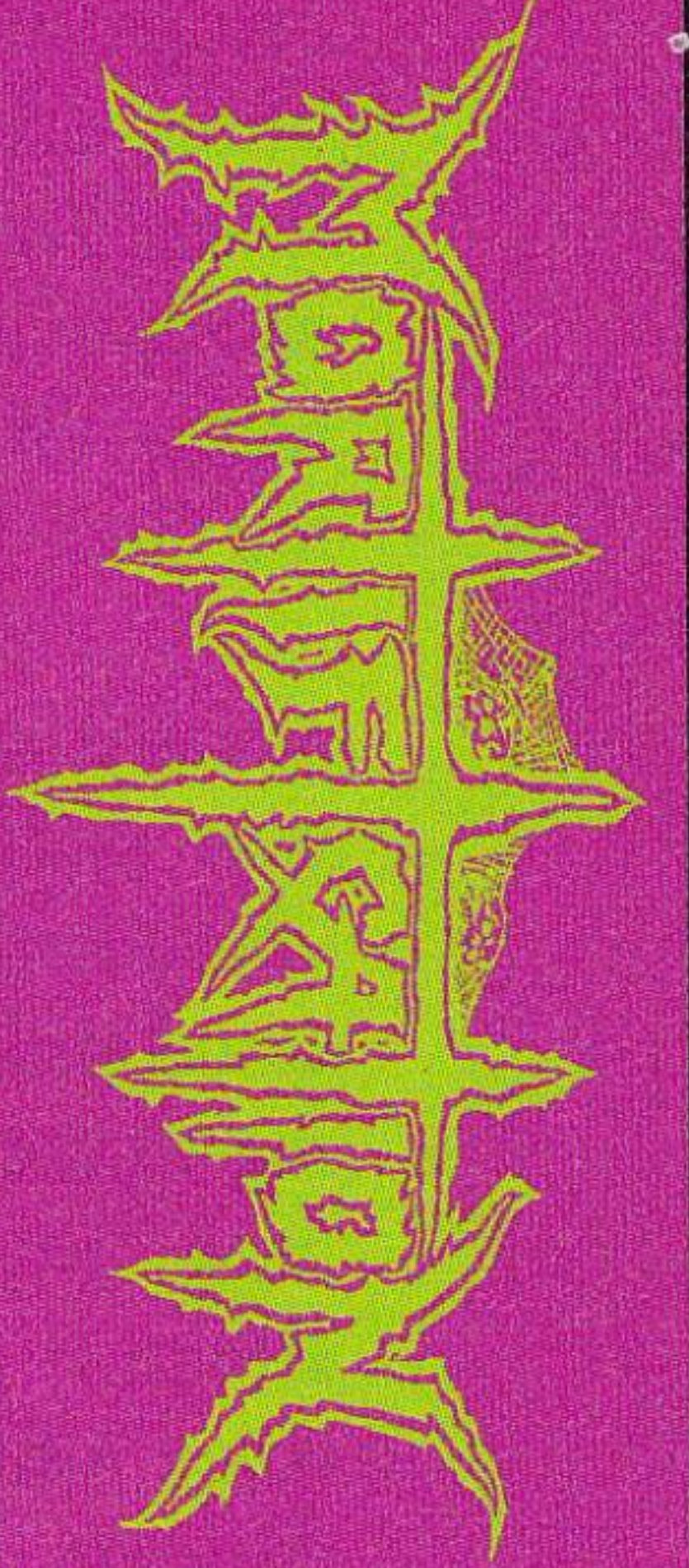


Left: CHRIS LIZOTTE; Right: SLEEPY RAY

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What Collision Sez:

Chaos/Columbia recording artists Collision is our guest in this issue's "What So & So Sez" feature. Listen in as bassist Gustavo "Gus" Vitureira and I talk about two of life's important issues for young people -- music and Jesus.

WHAT IS YOUR ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT MUSICAL SCENE?

"It's weird, because there are a lot of good rock and roll bands that aren't getting signed. There's a lot of good music that isn't being played on the radio. I guess it's always been like this, but I haven't really noticed it. It's like a wave of music. If one band makes it big, then every band that comes out after them that starts making it sounds the same. I'm hearing a lot of that right now. The whole Seattle/grunge thing. It's all over the place.

"I think it's pretty much radio's fault. They want to play something that sounds popular. It doesn't matter if it's good or not, only that it's popular. It's kind of depressing. It's either that or, on the other end of it, on the other scope of the whole situation is classic rock. That's the only other rock 'n' roll that you hear.

"In rap and house music, people will take chances and get away with it. In rock and roll, if you take a chance, it's like your a lefty or something. You're out in left field doing something crazy. No one wants to know about it, because you're not sounding like everybody else. We won't let any of that effect us. We're gonna maintain our own sound and our own style no matter what happens. We've been doing it so long, that we've never been affected by the scenes that are goin' down. We just do our own thing."

WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT GOD AND JESUS CHRIST?

"God and Christ. That's weird...uh. I, uh, have my own personal relationship with God. I'm not a highly religious person, because, personally, the organized religion is kind of out of place for me. I have little respect for organized religion and the way it is. As far as God goes, I have my own personal relationship. I'm sure, if there's a God, He knows I'm on His side."

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE PROBLEMS YOU HAVE WITH ORGANIZED RELIGION?

"Well, I just can't see myself having to follow...that I have to pray when somebody tells me to, and that I have to respect somebody because he wears a collar. There's

just too many flaws. There's too many things... The Roman Catholic Church is one of the biggest businesses in the world, as far as I'm concerned. You look at it, they've got more money than anybody else. It's like, it's them and the United States govern-

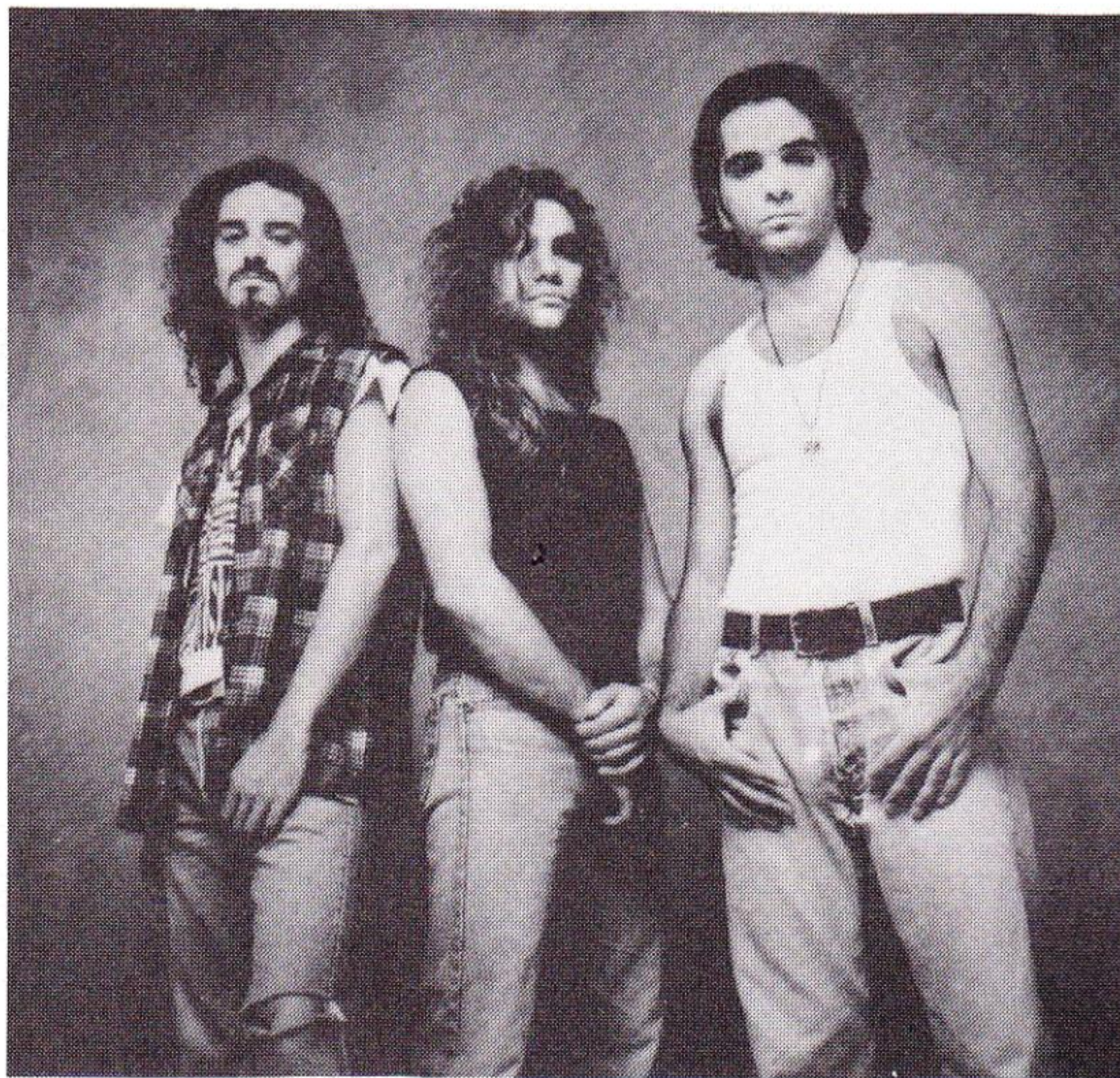
ment. They're like the two top businesses in the world. It's kind of ridiculous to me. They're using God's Name in vain for their money.

"The Pope walks around, he's got gold rings and all this stuff, and it's all supposedly this big religious thing and it's all supposedly the huge, 20-pound gold cross that he wears around his neck -- that's all in God's Name. But he goes to Somalia and the people are starving. That cross could probably feed 'em all, you know what I'm saying? It's just weird to me. I can't deal with it. I can't deal with seeing all that money locked up in one huge church and one huge organization, and them going, 'It's all about God,' and 'Save the world and the people.' And then you see a priest and the priest molests little kids, or the nuns have a fight against the priest because it's such a man's religion. It's all about men. The nuns can be nuns, and that's it. They'll never be priests, because they're female.

"I don't know, they take a little bit too much for granted, if you ask me. It's a little too one-sided. Everything is so one-sided. Just like any other religion, they're the first to point the finger. 'Oh, our religion is the best. We're the right ones. Our God is the real god.' How dare they! Who do they think they are? It drives me nuts."

IF YOU WERE GOING TO RE-ORGANIZE IT ALL, HOW WOULD YOU ORGANIZE IT?

"See, I wouldn't. I wouldn't organize it. I don't think religion should be organized. Religion is based on mysticism, you know, mystic beliefs in a higher being and a better life. That's not an organized situation. Once you organize mysticism, you



just blew it out of the water. It's gone. It's no longer mysticism. It's organized religion. It might as well be a business. So, I wouldn't. I'd say, 'Look! Either you believe in God, or you don't. If you believe in God, then you believe in everything that's good and right and you try and be a peaceful person and you try and be a kind person and

you try to do your best to help everybody that's around you -- the people that are close to you. Everybody's got family. You try to help your family the best you can. You try to live a good, decent life; and that's it. If you don't believe in God, and you think of other things and you're a bad person and that's the way you live.' It shouldn't be surrounded by religion and somebody telling you what you do and somebody telling how you should act and what you should give to and all that."

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE CLAIMS OF CHRIST TO BE THE ONLY WAY AND TO BE GOD IN THE FLESH?

"I don't know. I believe that Christ is the Man and He was a very cool, holy dude, you know. He walked around preaching peace and practicing love and all of that stuff. He was a great person. As far as being the One and the only, and the All-Holy...you know, there's too many other people who claim the same thing. I can't...I wasn't there. I can't say. As far as I'm concerned, the Bible is a story that is supposed to help children understand how to be a good person -- and that's it. For me, it's not a story that is supposed to dictate how you run your life."

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT HOW, IF JESUS, BEING A GREAT PERSON AND ALL, IF HE ACTUALLY SAID, "I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE, NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER BUT BY ME;" HE WAS EITHER LYING THERE, AND THEREFORE HE WAS A BAD PERSON, BECAUSE HE IS LYING ABOUT

GUS VITUREIRA, NIK CHINBOUKAS, ALEX KYRAZIS

WHO HE IS, OR HE IS A CRAZY MAN...

“Well, again, I don’t know that we can be sure that He actually said any of that. Like I said, as far as I’m concerned, the Bible is a story and it was written by somebody else. It wasn’t written by Jesus. It wasn’t written by...it was just some guy who wrote the Bible, who followed His story. Whether or not He said these things, I don’t know. I find it hard to believe a lot of the things that went down in the Bible, when all of the things that Jesus was talking about -- where peace and love and togetherness and, you know, believing in God and stuff like that. I find it hard to believe that He would claim that He was the only One and that God was the only way. I think it was a misinterpretation. I think that what He was saying is that peace and love and togetherness is the only way.

“People decided to use that as a good way to control the rest of the people. Somebody smart enough to say, ‘This is right and this is good, but you have to do it like this,’ because that will control everybody else. And that’s part of what I don’t like about organized religion -- is that they try to control people. I understand trying to teach people to be good. I understand trying to teach people to be peaceful, but trying to control people; I don’t get that.”

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PROMOTING PEACE AND CONTROLLING?

“It’s pretty simple. You say...promoting peace, you just go around and you say, ‘Be peaceful.’ You try to explain to somebody, ‘It’s better. It’s easier to be nice. It’s easier to be a good person. It’s easier to love, than it is to hate and kill and be an evil person.’ That’s promoting peace. Now, telling people, ‘You have to get up on Sunday and go to church; you have to wear a cross; you have to love one god; this is the god; this is the right religion; you have to follow this; you have to give money to this church;’ that kind of stuff to me is not teaching peace and love. That’s not promoting being a good person. That kind of stuff is being a drastic controller, trying to run things, trying to make people think the way you think.

“I know a lot of people who believe in God, that don’t believe in the church. People of not even the same religion -- Hebrew, Buddhists, Islam -- all these people that believe in God, but they don’t believe and they don’t trust their own religion. I know a lot of them. I live with them. I know ‘em. They’re in my neighborhood.

“It’s kind of weird. I hardly ever think about this stuff or discuss it too much, because I’m not a highly religious person. I

just believe that you have to be good and you have to be a peaceful person and that...if there’s a God, you’re on His side -- right there. If I was God, let me not to take His Name...try not to be blasphemous or anything, but if I was God I wouldn’t need anybody to worship me. See what I’m saying? I would just need people to be good. I would just hope that the people are peaceful and loving -- and that’s it.

“Why would God need to make demands on everybody? I don’t get it. That’s why I say I’ve got my own relationship with God and most of the organized religion would probably hate me and say that I’m an evil person, but it’s not true. They can talk all they want. Just because I don’t follow their way of life... My way is about as...at least as good as theirs. It’s just different.”

YEAH, HEAVEN’S METAL IS A MAGAZINE THAT PREDOMINANTLY COVERS WHAT’S CALLED THE CHRISTIAN HEAVY METAL REALM, BUT IN EVERY ISSUE I DO INTERVIEWS WITH PEOPLE WHO DON’T FIT INTO THAT NICE LITTLE BOX. IT’S KIND OF A CONFINING BOX. I TALK TO PEOPLE, LIKE LIVING COLOUR, QUEENSRYCHE, TESTAMENT, COLLISION, AND KIND OF ASK THEM WHERE THEY’RE COMING FROM IN THIS AREA AND KIND OF GET SOME FEEDBACK BOTH WAYS. KIND OF GET TO HEAR WHERE THEY’RE COMING FROM AND HEAR WHERE I’M COMING FROM.

“The religion I’m used to, I don’t point fingers and say that it’s bad. It’s their way, and if it works for them, that’s cool; but I can’t see somebody telling me that this is the way it has to be -- especially throughout history. All the factors you see. It’s not always true. There’s always someone...some fallen angel or some evil priest...always someone somewhere that proves it wrong, that proves it different. It’s not...there’s no way. I don’t believe in the one-ness. I don’t believe that there’s only one way to Heaven. I don’t believe there’s only one door to Heaven, or one door to the heart of God. That’s what organized religion expects of you.

“It makes me feel bad. I actually grew up...my parents are Christians, Catholic actually, Roman Catholic, and we grew up going to church and all that stuff, but I just...I can’t grasp it as an all-loving thing. I have my relationship with God and it’s very personal. I can worship in my own way and feel safe that I’m on God’s side. But, as far as religion

goes, that’s another story. It’s good for some people, but not for me.”

I PERSONALLY HATE RELIGION MYSELF. I LOOK AT IT IN A LOT OF WAYS AS BEING MAN-MADE RULES TO TELL YOU HOW TO FOLLOW GOD AND I’M CONVINCED THAT CHRIST IS WHO HE SAID HE WAS. HE DEFINITELY CAME TO EARTH AS A JEWISH PERSON AND HE MADE IT CLEAR TO JEWISH PEOPLE THAT HE WAS SAYING THAT HE WAS GOD AND THEY WANTED TO KILL HIM FOR IT, AND THEY DID. I’M CONVINCED THAT THE RESURRECTION IS TRUE BY HISTORICAL EVIDENCE AND THAT THE BIBLE HAS A LOT OF EVIDENCE BEHIND IT SHOWING THAT IT’S REAL, BUT I THINK THAT, ALL THAT CONSIDERED, I DON’T NEED A BUNCH A LIST OF RULES TO LIVE BY, BECAUSE I KNOW THAT I CAN’T KEEP ALL THE RULES ANYWAY...

“Exactly.”

...BECAUSE I’M NOT GOOD ENOUGH, AND THAT’S WHY I BELIEVE CHRIST CAME, BECAUSE WE CAN’T FULFILL ALL THE RULES. ONLY HE COULD AND THEN HE DIED AS A SACRIFICE AND, THROUGH THAT PAYMENT -- INSTEAD OF ME HAVING TO GO THROUGH THE PAYMENT THAT HE WENT THROUGH -- HE TOOK IT FOR ME...

“Right.”

...AND THAT’S PEACE AND LOVE. IF I CAN LIVE UP TO HIS EXAMPLE, WITH HIS SPIRIT LIVING IN ME, THEN I CAN PROMOTE PEACE AND BE LOVING AND KIND AND NOT TRY AND BE A HYPOCRITE, LIKE A LOT OF RELIGION IS.

“Definitely, definitely. Like you said, it’s there to teach you. It’s there to show you, but it’s not there... I think Christ left it open to where you can be yourself as well as being the peaceful and loving person that everyone would expect you to. I think that there’s an opening there, that you can take it easy. I mean, Christ was the most forgiving person you hear of in history. One of His biggest things was to forgive. I mean, that just goes to show you. You can only be as

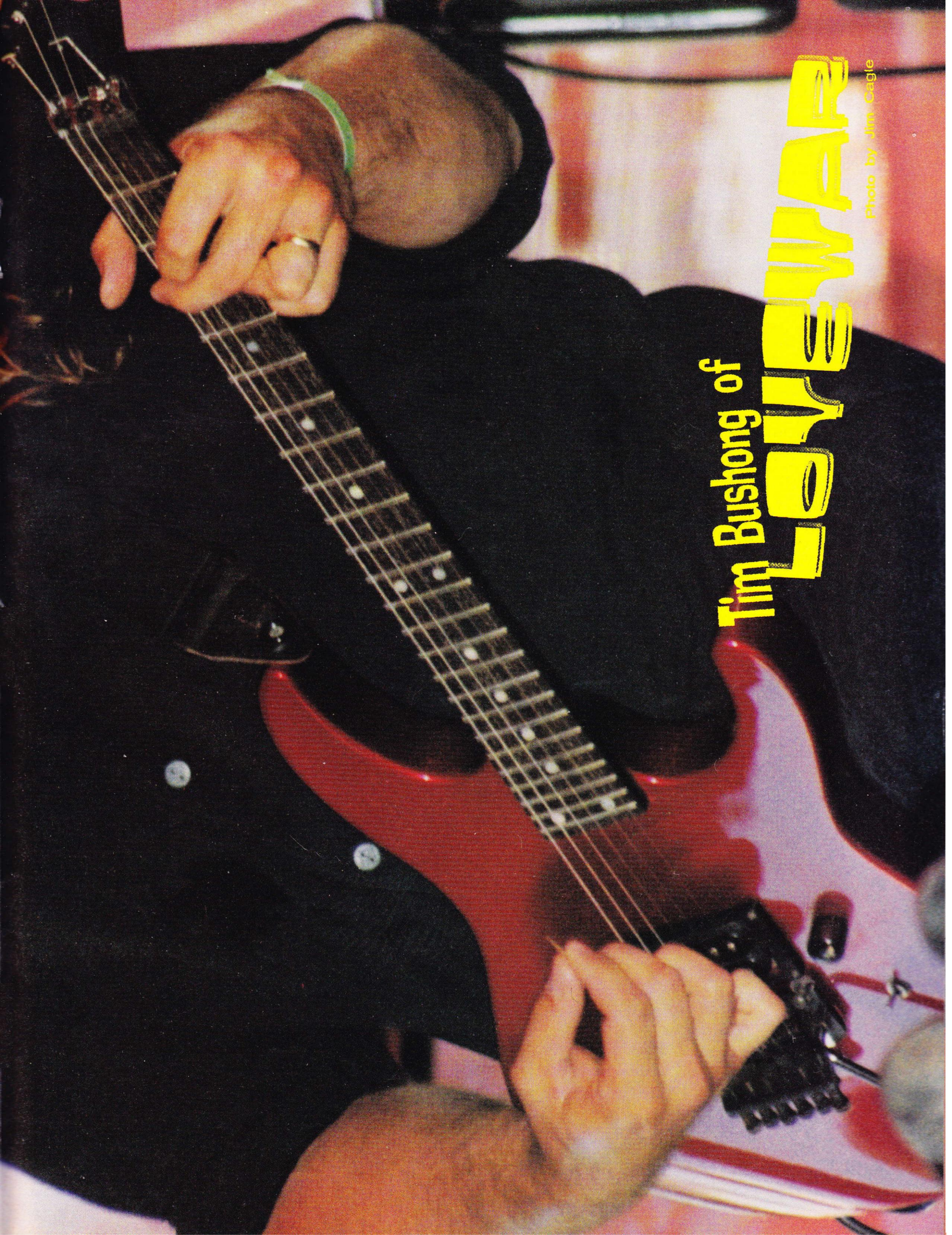


HEAVEN'S
METAL
YOUR HARD MUSIC AUTHORITY

Tim Bushong of

RAW

Photo by Jim Cagle



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good as you try to be. You can never be as good as He was, or as good as the story is, or as good as they expect the god that you pray to be. You can never be that good, because if you were, then you'd be Him! Then you'd be the madman running around killing people in Texas!"

INSANE.

"But it happens. That's the way it is. I just believe that you've got to try and be as good a person as you can, and everything else will fall into place."

IF YOU'D BE INTERESTED, I COULD SEND YOU OUT A BOOK THAT TALKS ABOUT THE BIBLE AND KIND OF EVIDENCE...IT'S KIND OF A SCIENTIFIC LOOK AT THE BIBLE AND ALL, IF YOU'D BE INTERESTED IN LOOKING AT IT.

"A scientific look at the Bible? Well, not particularly. Like I said, I've done a lot of research to back up my feeling. Like I told you, I grew up Catholic and we were into it. My family was totally into it. My mother still is and my wife's mother still is and they're very religious and I've done my research and made my decisions. I go my way, and it works for me. I don't think anybody can come to me and say that I'm a bad person, and be right about it."

IT'S NOT A VERY FRIENDLY APPROACH EITHER, IS IT?

"Nope. When somebody comes out and points a finger at you and says, 'You're doing this wrong.' It's like, 'How about what you're doing wrong?' Who can tell you?"

I THINK JESUS HATED RELIGION. HE BLASTED THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS A LOT. THEY WERE HYPOCRITES.

"Yeah, see. Then the Catholics came and took that and also destroyed it. Jesus came and blasted the organized religion. He comes and blows 'em all out of the water and He says that they're selling things and making money and making profit off of God; and then the Catholics come along and just do the same thing in a different way. They just added their own thing and changed it up a little bit and made it work for them."

THAT'S WHERE THE CORRUPTION OF RELIGION COMES IN. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF AN ARTIST IN THEIR LYRIC WRITING OR WHATEVER? HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT WRITING A PRO-SUICIDE SONG OR AN

ANTI-GOD SONG?

"Well, personally, I would never write something like that, but not because of my beliefs. It's not in my program to write negative things. I think everybody should be allowed to write what they feel. Writing and singing and stuff like that -- I always felt it was a personal thing. If you want to listen to it, you do. If you don't, don't listen to it. And that's it. You should have the freedom to express that."

"A lot of people will write something and it'll be misinterpreted. If somebody writes a song about suicide, it doesn't necessarily mean that he's preaching that you should go out and commit suicide. He probably felt like that at the moment when he was writing. He probably felt like he wanted to kill himself, and he wrote about it instead of doing it -- to express and show that it shouldn't be done, to express the feeling and the mood that he was in when it happened. That can't be bad. Even if it isn't a positive song, the person might've been feeling that way and he should be allowed to express it."

"Personally, I don't have any of those feelings that I would write about like that. You would never hear those songs or lyrics like that from me. Like that 'Cop Killer' thing. That's about Ice-T's neighborhood and where he grew up and how he had to deal with cops and the abuse that they handed to him and people that he knows. He wrote about it. It doesn't necessarily mean that he was preaching that everybody go out and start killing cops. He said it himself. That's not what he meant. It was just a song about the way things were in his neighborhood, a song about a kid's lost his mind and that's what he felt he had to do -- to go out and fight hand to hand with cops."

"The song got all this controversy and all this craziness, just because it said, 'Cop Killer,' but it's not really what he was saying. He wasn't saying, 'Go out and kill the cops.' It was a song. It's kind of iffy to me. I can't blame somebody for writing something that they feel or something that they see or hear. One of the songs on the record, 'Juicy Lucy,' is about a story that we read in the news. It says 'Lucy takes her kids, throws 'em in a bag and puts 'em in the garbage.' Does that mean that we're saying that you should go out and kill your children and put 'em in plastic bags? No, that's not what it means. It's just something that we read. We happened to read it and it was a newspaper story and it was something that really touched us, so we wrote about it. It doesn't mean it's bad or anything. It doesn't mean we're preaching that you should do it, but things get misinterpreted. It still should be allowed. People should be allowed to say what they want to say. That'll give people a chance to

decide whether it's good or bad. If you're not allowed to say something, nobody's going to know whether it's good or bad."

MOST OF THE TIMES, WHEN YOU GET THESE MIS-REPRESENTATIONS, IT'S PEOPLE JUDGING A BOOK BY ITS COVER AND NOT REALLY INVESTIGATING IT. THEY JUST LOOK AT THE OUTSIDE AND JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS. I THINK A LOT OF PEOPLE DO THAT WITH CHRISTIANITY TOO, BECAUSE THEY SEE AN EXAMPLE ON TV OR SOMETHING. THEY DON'T REALLY LOOK INTO, YOU KNOW, "WHAT ARE THE FACTS ON THE TABLE? WHO DID JESUS CHRIST SAY HE WAS? IS THIS HISTORICALLY ACCURATE? IS THIS JUST A MADE-UP FAIRY TALE, OR IS IT TRUE HISTORY?" IT GETS THROWN OUT. YOU SEE SOME GOOD EXAMPLES OUT THERE, BUT YOU ALSO SEE SOME WACKY ONES.

"Yeah, some people don't even bother to look at history and look at actual historical findings in the Middle East and stuff like that, where the grave was... People don't even look into it, and right away they judge it. Like I said, I think it works both ways. Organized religion people do the same thing. They judge right away. They're quick to judge. One of Jesus' things was not to judge."

YEAH, CAUSE WE DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT.

"It's like, 'Who are you to judge others? You're just a man. Who are you to judge another man? Leave that judgement up to God, and everything will be alright.'"

HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT ANYWAY. I COULD JUDGE YOU AND SAY, "GO TO HELL!" BUT YOU'RE NOT GONNA GO.

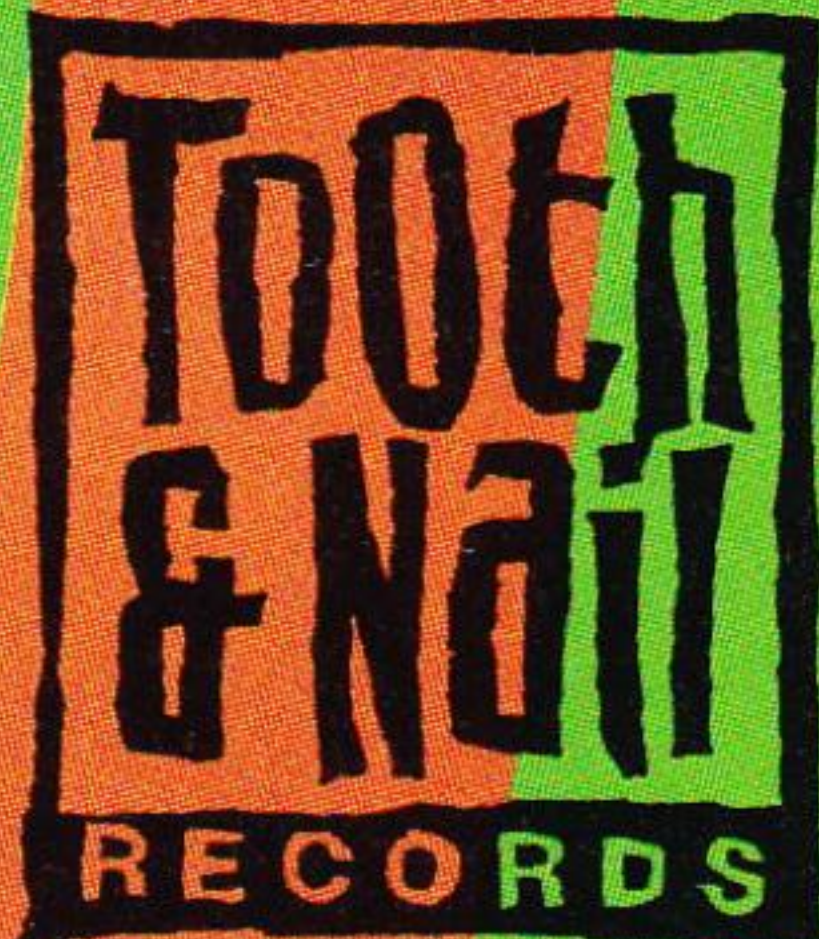
"And it will only be your opinion, that's it. You could judge me, tell me what to do with my life, but it will only be your opinion. It won't be real. It won't be the final word."

WELL, I APPRECIATE THIS TALK. I HOPE TO GET A CHANCE TO MEET YA SOMETIME.

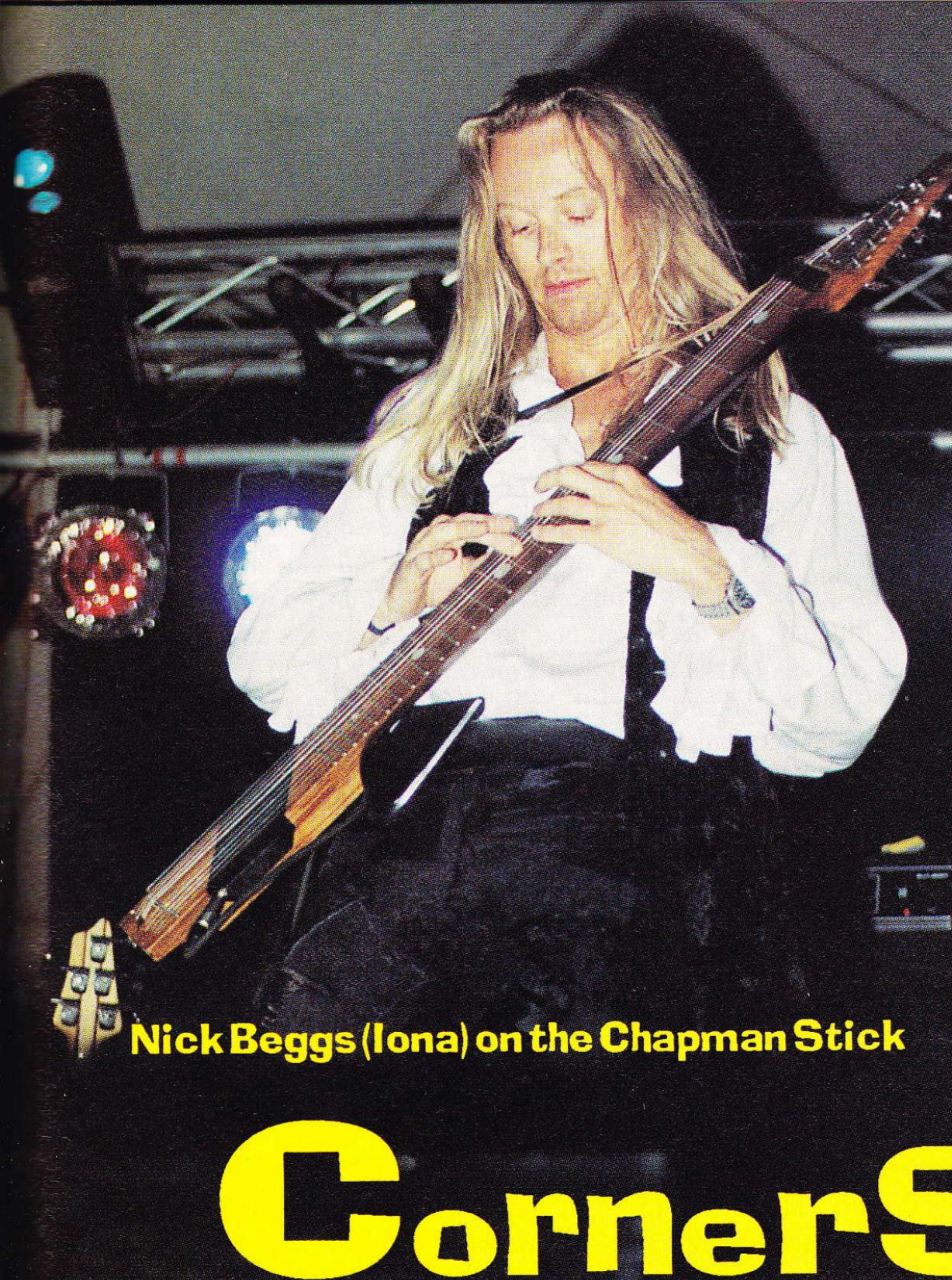
"My pleasure. Hopefully next time we come around we'll see ya."

HM

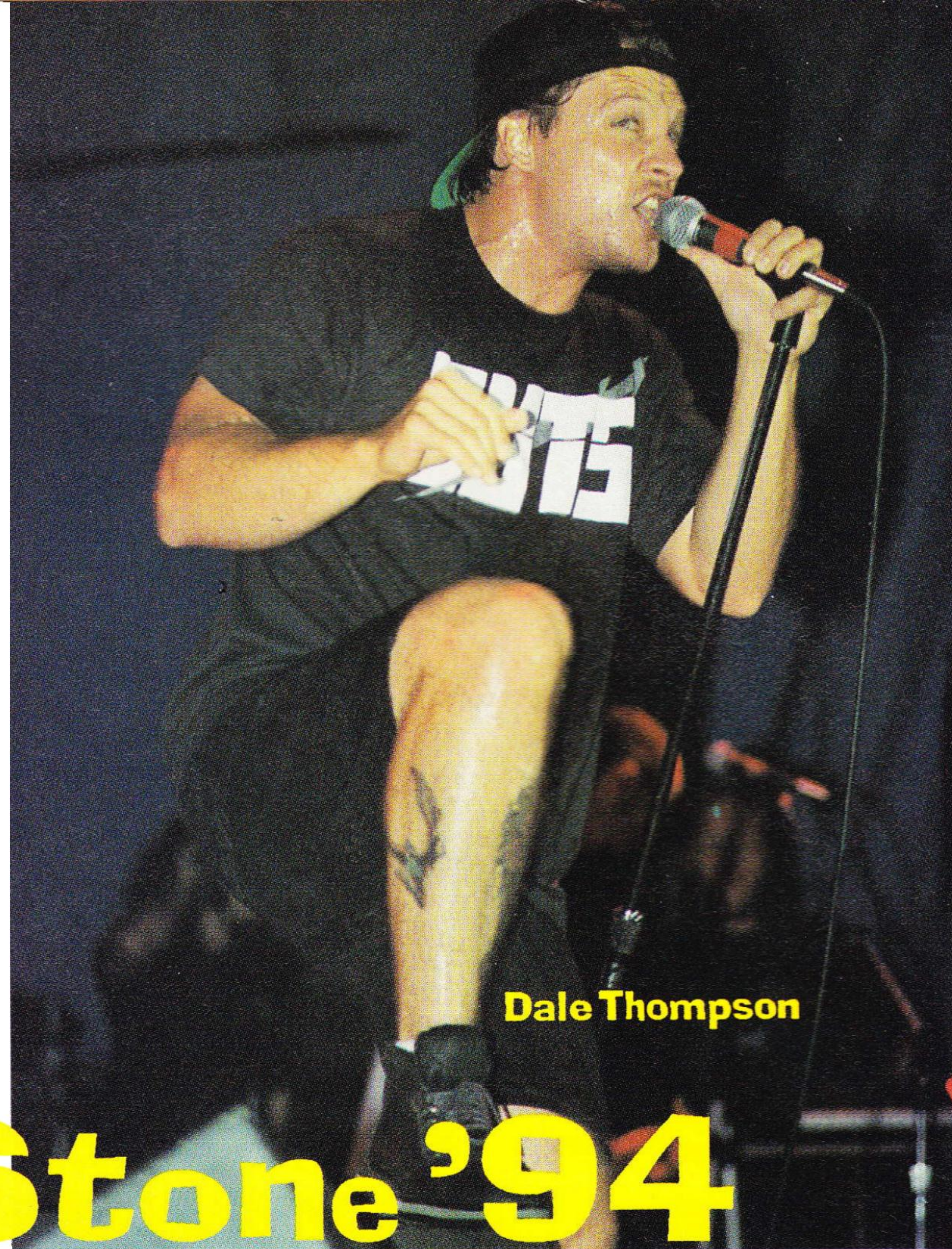
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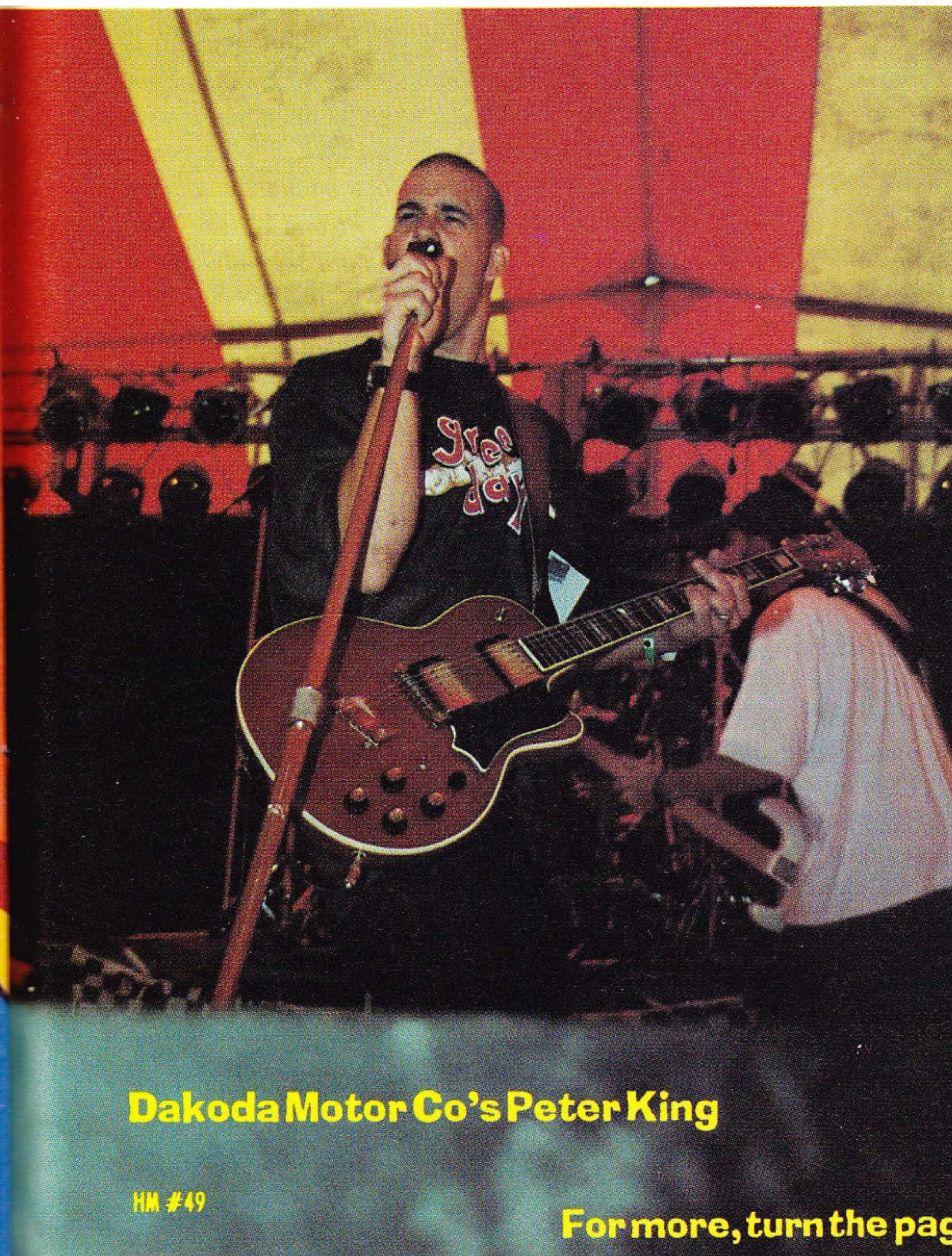


Nick Beggs (Iona) on the Chapman Stick

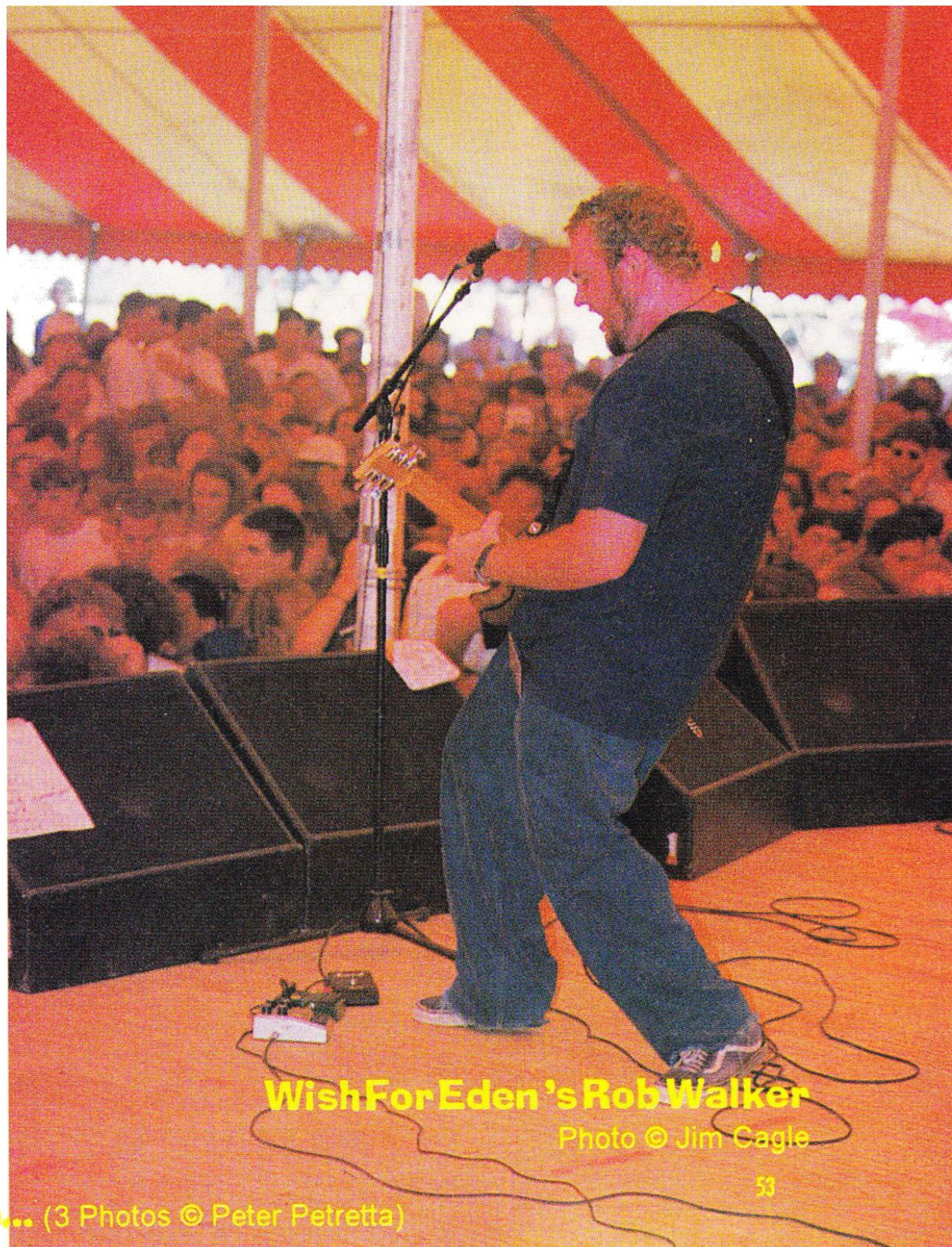


Dale Thompson

CornerStone '94



Dakota Motor Co's Peter King



Wish For Eden's Rob Walker

Photo © Jim Cagle



C-stone '94



It was another fun four days at **Cornerstone** this year. The general schedule was as promising as ever, plus there were additional venues, like the Sanctuary tent and the tent/stage run by Diamante Distribution, where several "unofficial" acts played.

The fest started with a bang after opening ceremonies, with **Wish For Eden** hitting some grungy low notes in the summer heat. Lead vocalist/guitarist Rob Walker strolled onstage with total nonchalance and started drenching everyone with their own sweat as the audience and band became one moving (some moshing and stage-diving) mass. The band sounded great.

Dig Hay Zoose was next up, and they announced that they were recording their set for a live album release (tentatively titled *MagentaManta Live Tree*). Their sound was as full and funky as ever, causing the crowd to swirl furiously in a pit. The crowd was very into DHZ this day, but they went one notch further up the energy scale when **Allan Aguirre** of **Scaterd Few** came out and did a medley of a few Scaterd standards, like "Later (L.A. 1989)" and "Self." The crowd went nuts and sang every word. **Dan Michaels** of **Choir** fame came out and played a little saxophone. It's all gonna sound pretty nice when that CD comes out next month!

Tourniquet opened the main stage on night number one to an appreciative crowd that moshed and sang along. Having been on the road for a couple of weeks prior, the band sounded fine tuned and heavy. Starting off with "The Test For Leprosy," the energy level barely let up until the ballad intro to "My Promise." Ted's solo section for "K517" was great, evoking tons of applause from the audience.

The organizers for the festival did a good job of not scheduling conflicting performances during the "encore" slots at the end of the night (like in 1991, when The Crucified and One Bad Pig both played at the same time). If you're eclectic, though, and want to see both a band like Iona and Circle of Dust, you have to make a choice. Fortunately, the walk between several of the stages isn't far, so you can catch a little of both.

It was easy to be mesmerized by the atmospheric and ultra-clean sounds emitted by **Iona**. This band sounded so fresh and unique that their sound pulled you in. The sonics were so clean that it was as if you were listening to a band like Pink Floyd with headphones on. Using lots of instruments and layers to weave their sound, the guitars of Dave Bainbridge cut through all these layers with a crystal clear tone that was just beautiful. If I ever get a chance to see this innovative band again, I'll be sure and catch their entire set. But, as duty and musical tastebuds call, I had to gallivant over to the tent that was kicking up some nighttime dust...

Circle of Dust played on the "Encore II" stage, the sound system of which gave them fits all night long. This was really a "Semi-Circle of Dust" show, because the band's A-DAT machine was on the blink, so the band went virtually sample-less for the duration of its set. Midway through an already frustrating set, the band ripped into "Dissolved," only to have all the power go out 2/3 through the song. Once the lights and power were back on, the band ripped into it again, only to have the power fail in the exact same part of the song. Not wanting to push fate, the band forged ahead with another song. Not having samples may seem like the end of the world to some industrial bands, but Circle sounded awesome in its raw form. The guitar onslaught was just massive, and the incredible volume certainly didn't hurt! "Deviate" sounded particularly great this night.

The very fact that Circle kept going amidst these troubles is a real indication of the band's fortitude. At the end of the long set, Daren Diolosa smashed his guitar to bits. It was like a radical resolution to the frustration that the band's equipment wrought. The first encore was their Steve Taylor tribute, "Am I In Sync," which was complimented by a cool laser light show on the roof of the tent.

For the second encore, "Descend," Jeff Bellew and Bryan Gray from The Blamed came on stage. By the end of the song, many friends and band mates tossed Scott Albert into the audience. Because of the band's perseverance and killer performance, this was one of the most impressive sets of the festival.

Poor Old Lu brought its subdued Seattle sound to the "Indoor Stage" after the even more subdued alternative subpop sound of **Sixpence None The Richer**. Next door to these two bands were the more metal side of all the 12 artists chosen for the "New Band Showcase" -- **P.O.D.**, **Strongarm** and **Don't Know**. Mostly moving in the hardcore sound, these bands kept the energy flowin' between audience and performers. P.O.D.'s set, much anticipated by this reviewer, was a little bit looser than they seemed capable of pulling off. The band seemed slightly out of step with one another, but the audience didn't seem to mind, cause it was power riffs and it was loud!

The highlight of the entire fest for me was getting a chance to see two of my favorite bands on the same day -- **Lovewar** and **Precious Death**. Lovewar played in the Sanctuary tent and, even though there was no platform to serve as a stage, the band seemed giant in its musical power. With nothing to hide behind and a weak sound system to boot, guitarist **Tim Bushong**, bassist **Rick Armstrong**, and drummer **Greg Purlee** reached down inside and pulled out their big harmonies and killer, locked-in grooves. Amidst sound trouble, Tim kept the set flowing well with his good natured jokes and thought-provoking, theological educated questions and comments. No one song in particular stood out, because they were all great. It was cool to see a band put in a first class performance in third class surroundings (not trying to slam the Sanctuary tent at all, but it was definitely an understated, humble place to perform).

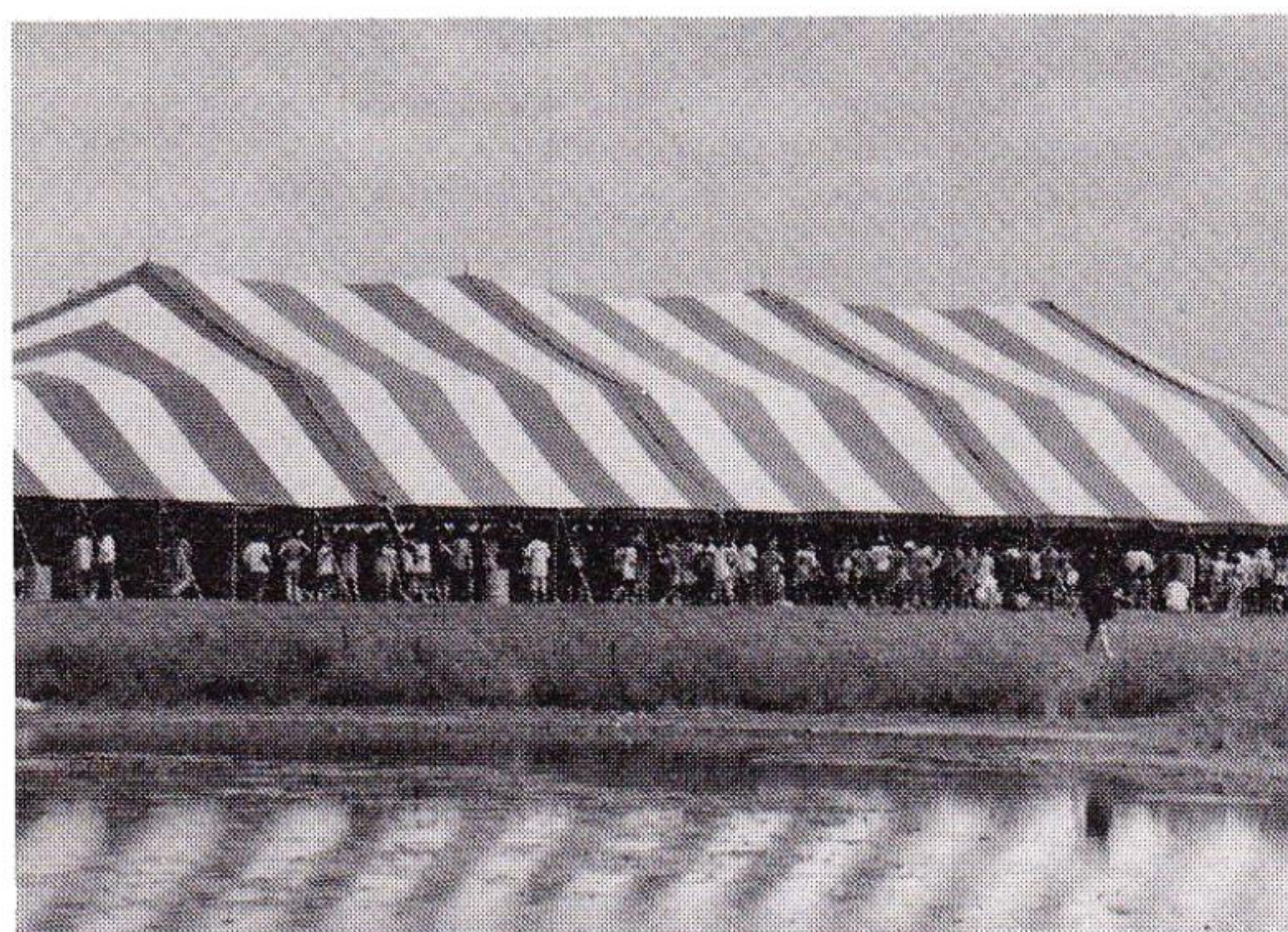
Precious Death packed out the even-smaller Diamante Distribution tent. I enjoyed seeing their set in between one guy's elbow and another guy's head, if you know what I mean. They tried out a couple of new songs, one of which vocalist **Christopher Scott** referred to as "The Catholic Song" (really called "So Far Away"), which emphasized the necessity for a personal relationship with Christ versus a set of beliefs or following rituals.

The Prayer Chain started the mainstage on night two, giving the moshers in the crowd some tuneage to feast on. This crowd kicked up some major dust, to which vocalist **Tim Tabor** remarked, "So that's how Circle of Dust got their name?!"

Bride came on next and roared through their tight but free-flowing set, including the mega breakdown during "Hired Gun," complete with the Zeppelin riffs, and another spot where the band flew into "Bullet The Blue Sky" during "Under The Influence." Hearing some of the new songs, like "Scarecrow" and "Murder," live was a real treat, as the band played like they'd written 'em a year ago (which they did, actually!). Overall, a good set -- as expected.

Mortification played a set with lots of new material for their late night set. **Steve Rowe** and co. reported that the set went great, with fans going crazy full-time. It was new drummer **Phil Gibson**'s introduction to this festival, and I'm sure the memory will stick with him for a long time. **Chris Lizotte** and band played at the "Gallery Stage" (booked with more mellow, contemplative acts) during this same late night. Reports are that it turned into a real worship experience for band and audience.

Dakoda Motor Co. and **PFR** played the "Indoor Stage" on Saturday, July 2nd. Befitting the second band's name, the clouds poured down plenty of rain early that morning. Dakota entertained plenty of surfpunk fans and people who just love to mosh, while PFR



offered more of a pop experience, including the heavy tunes "Walk Away From Love" and "Do You Want to Know Love." Meanwhile, over in the "New Talent" tent, a band called **Messiah Experience** performed some golden classic Southern rock. It was really a great experience to see these guys, cause they were authentic Southern rockers with good songs and great guitar tones. This style has always been a favorite of mine, and it's rare that a Christian band comes along and nails it like these guys.

Usually, every year at Cornerstone has one or two "buzz bands" that seem to give the festival a unique identity. This year, it wasn't just one or two bands, but over half a dozen. At this year's Cornerstone festival, hardcore ruled the day. Saturday was billed as "Hardcore Day," with a scheduled five-hour jam outdoors on the "Impromptu Stage" by the skate ramp. Well, PFR brought the rain with 'em, so it looked like it wouldn't happen at all...

But wait! Spike Nard and Crashdog have connections with the festival (!), so the JPUSA cafeteria building (the only permanent structure on Cornerstone Farm) became a giant mosh pit and sea for people to float six feet in the air. In fact, many of the stage divers grabbed onto the beams running along the ceiling and swung from it. **The Blamed**, **The Clergy**, **Focused**, **Jesus Freaks**, and **Six Feet Deep** all played feverish sets that sounded pretty good -- even in that big echo-ing room. **Jim Chaffin** of The Blamed was home with his pregnant wife (awaiting blessing #2!), so ex-Vengeance Rising drummer **Johnny Vasquez** was there to fill in with the high velocity beats. Tim Mann, the singer for Focused, preached hardcore. The Jesus Freaks, who didn't mince words either (nobody on this stage was shy about Jesus), had the heaviest metal sound, while Six Feet Deep wasn't far behind in kuR-runchability.

A couple of other hardcore bands played on the "impromptu stage," like **Unashamed**, but another sign that showed how hardcore ruled the day was the number of Tooth & Nail hats and shirts, etc. that were floating around the fest grounds. While there's always been a large contingent of Doc Martin boot wearin' folks at Cornerstone, this year the shaved heads probably outnumbered the longhairs.

Living Sacrifice took the stage on day four of the fest just after Tourniquet's **Gary Lenaire** chose the winning name out of the jar for the Heaven's Metal/Abernathy Guitars Giveaway. It was amazing, but there were two **David Paul**'s in the audience. I felt so sorry for the first one, who didn't live at the address of the winning David Paul. Anyway, it was an exciting moment for the winner, who didn't play guitar, but now had a great incentive for his brother to teach him! He was speechless.

Living Sacrifice tore through a hot set of their three album's worth of material. At the same time, **Mr. Bishop's Fist** blasted away on the "New Talent" stage. There were many other events during the fest which have gone unreported on, like the **Chatterbox**, **Mission of Mercy**, **Starflyer 59**, and **Mortal** sets in the Diamante tent, but there was just too much to see and do and choose from that it leaves one reviewer tired. I heard that Jyro of Mortal said some very touching things during their "farewell to Cornerstone" set, like: "We don't always understand God. We're doing better than we've ever done as a band. I mean, we're actually getting paid now, but God told us to lay it down." He then led everyone on their knees for prayer. This is the kind of cool stuff that may get unreported on earth, but certainly gets noticed in Heaven and has lots more of a lasting impression on those involved.

C-Ya next year?!!

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METAL TRACKS

Betrayal has sent us the following statement:

"We as Betrayal regret to announce through Heaven's Metal, the main voice of the Christian metal movement, that Betrayal as a group has officially disbanded. The band split up as a unit near the end of 1993, but out of respect to all parties involved, we kept it quiet until this time. Guitarist Marcus Colon will continue on in music and concentrate on other projects. Vocalist Chris Ackerman will be speaking on the subject of God's power to youth groups and churches.

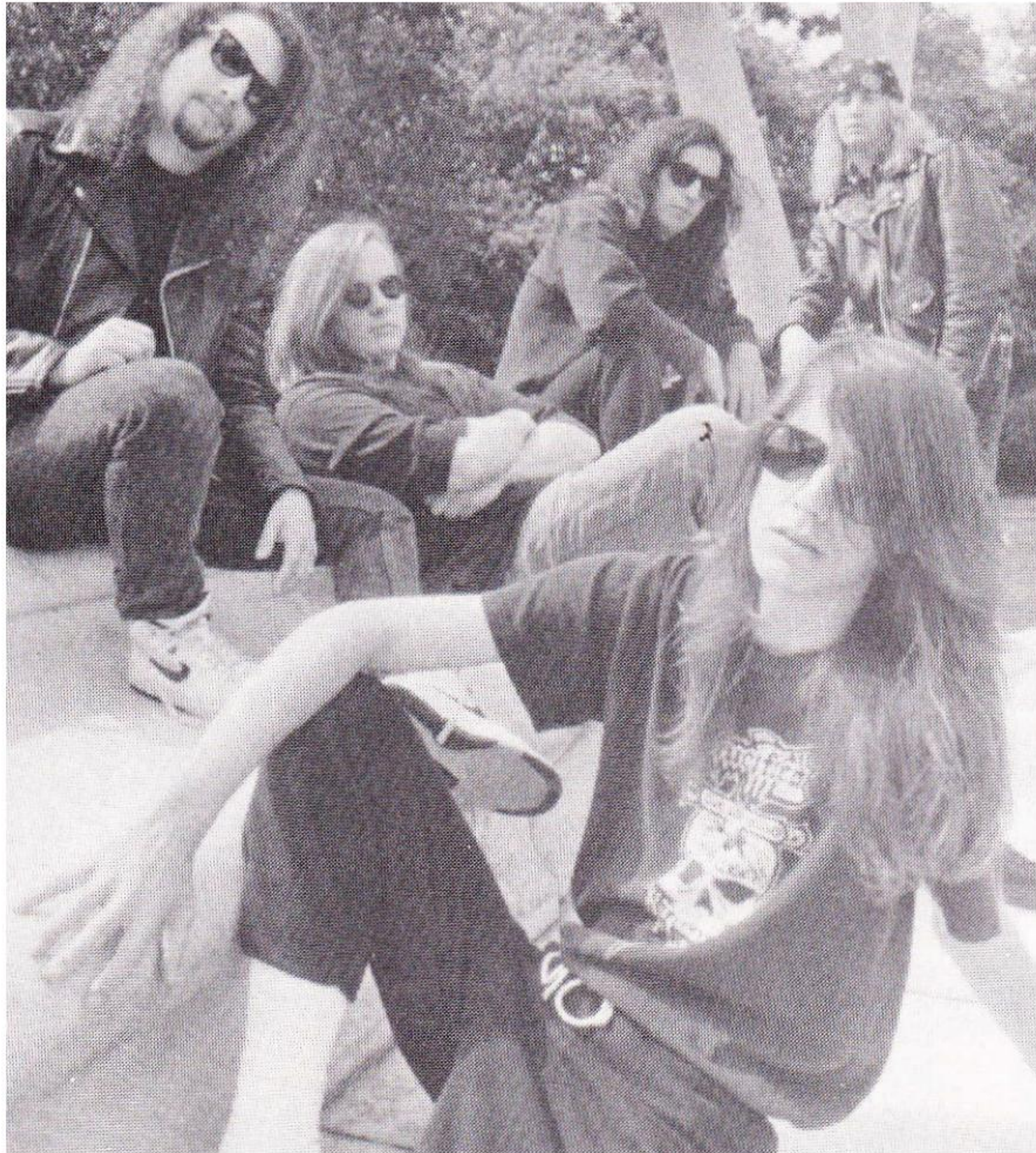
"Even though Betrayal has disbanded, we ask for serious prayer from the body of Christ, as we are still facing a wrongful death lawsuit from an accident that occurred in Arizona in May of 1993. We would appreciate ongoing prayer, as this situation continues and develops in the future.

"Finally, we as Betrayal would like to thank all of the dedicated fans who have supported us these past four years. It has meant a great deal to us. May God richly bless you for your encouragement and love. All Betrayal merchandise (except hats) is still available through our address, and all correspondence will be received and answered. We would love to hear from each and every one of you; and thanks for the memories."

Crashdog filmed their new video, "Voice of Defiance," while on a stop during the Hardcore '94 tour (renamed "Hard Floor '94" by Spike Nard) in Ohio. It was supposed to be an outdoor show, but rain sent it indoors, where the mauve sanctuary presented a challenge to the video crew (punk and mauve just don't cut it), who improvised a backdrop quickly. The video will be on *Pet Projects*, Grrr's compilation video.

Daren Diolosa of **Circle of Dust** tells us that "in the future we will be re-recording (not remixing) the first Circle album and re-releasing it through Relativity also. Thanks to everyone for their support. It does not go by unappreciated. If you want to contact us, write to: PO Box 305, Bethpage, NY 11714."

Ordained Fate announces that they will be recording a new album. Some of the tracks will be: "So Many Hours," "Divine Abandonment," "Santa's Little



Helpers," and "Parade of Pain" -- the tentative title track. For further info, write: PO Box 923, Zion, IL 60099.

Precious Death's new album is being produced by **Brian Garcia**, who produced the debut album for **20/20 Blind** and engineered the *Space in Your Face* album by **Galactic Cowboys**.

Ultimatum is sad to announce the departure of bassist, **Greg Dingess**. Greg has decided to pursue a career as a pharmacist and spend more time with his fiancé. God has provided a new bassist in only a week -- **Mike Ricoby**, who recently moved to Albuquerque from Portland, Oregon, is the new man.

Fear Not has a new address/phone number for all booking inquiries and/or correspondence. Write: c/o Tom Stowe, 1651 W. Foothill Bl. #F, Suite 262, Upland, CA 91786-3592. Booking/Management - (818) 558-7503; Touring - (909) 371-8006; Fax - (909) 920-5743.

Empty Tomb's *Welcome to the Human Race* will be available on CD. As a bonus, there'll be three songs from *Live Like A Dead Man* and three brand new songs on it. For more info, write: PO Box 20714, Salem, OR 97307-0714.

At 2:30 a.m. on May 24th, **Poison's** lead singer **Bret Michaels** lost control of his Ferrari, hitting a telephone pole head on at what Burbank Police estimated to be about 80 miles per hour. Check out what Poison drummer, Rikki Rockett, had to say in response: "Bret has

been living way too out of control lately. He is lucky to be alive this time. The police said he should have been dead. This is the second time this has happened -- once on his Harley and now this. I think we need to hire him a permanent driver." I bet God's keeping him around so he can come to know Jesus. This is another reminder that we ought to be praying for the people around us and those in "the limelight."

Cry For Dawn is the name of the new band of vocalist **Roger Estes**, former lead growler for **Never Death** and **Salt on Slugs**.

Sevenfold's new lead singer is **Brenda Barnett** of **Seventh Sign**. Also on drums will be **Mike Barnett**, formerly of the Christian band **Crumbacher**. The band plans to record the second album soon. For updated info, write: PO Box 681, Mt. Sinai, NY 11766-0681.

The U.S. Air Force is getting involved in the new **Tamplin** tour. The Cadet Chaplain's Office of the Air Force Academy has booked the "Testify Tour '94," which includes **Lovewar**, **Jeff Scheetz**, and **David Hill & The New City Band**. The show will be September 25th. (**Red Sea** is no longer part of the bill)

Benson Music Group has signed an exclusive distribution deal with Liberty Records. This will put albums by **Michael Sweet** and **DeGarmo & Key** into the mainstream marketplace. Liberty Records has also purchased the name Patriot Records from Michael Betts, whose label will now be called Rugged Records. No artist rosters were exchanged in the deal, though, just a name.

Legend Seven was voted #1 in the Rock category and was named "the hottest new hype" in Christian rock by *You! Magazine*.

The Oh-Zone Players is **Michael Bloodgood's** newest band. They have "a strict, no-rehearsal policy," reports Michael, who leads a Bible study as an outreach of Calvary Eastside.

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Erik Ney, formerly of the band **Sacrament**, has been practicing with **Sardonyx** to fill in for the departed bass player, **Chuck Turner**. It is still uncertain as to whether Erik will join on a permanent basis.

Larry Norman's *Stranded in Babylon* album is now available stateside through Sonrise Music, which is distributed by Diadem and Riverside World.

America's Christian Music Awards will be part of the new "Contemporary Christian Music Week" at Walt Disney World. The nominees for the "Favorite Rock CD" category are: *Evolution* by **Geoff Moore & The Distance**; *Miracle Mile* by **Guardian**; *Wake Up Call* by **Petra**; *Goldie's Last Day* by **PFR**; *Michael Sweet*, and *Highlands* by **White Heart**. The nominees for "Favorite Rock Group" are: **Guardian**; **Legend Seven**; **Petra**; **PFR**; and **White Heart**.

The Great Awakening Music Fest '94 will feature the only New England performance of **Steve Taylor**. There will also be regional metal bands performing as well.

PFR will be performing at the 1994 National Youth Worker's Convention in Chicago and in San Diego.

M.R. Butler Promotions is promoting a series of concerts in Mexico with **Guardian** and **Fear Not**, among others, with the financial backing of the Mexican government! A two-year exclusive agreement with the Mexican government that provides for six concerts begins this month. For more details, write: PO Box 1067, Tomboll, TX 77377-1067; or call (713) 786-0349.

Aimee Patrick of Diadem Music received a phone call from the Post Office, which told her, "several pigs had gotten loose in the U.S. mail." Fortunately, the pigs spoken of were copies of the new *The Quintessential One Bad Pig, Volume One* album being shipped to singer **Carey Womack**. The Pig is still continuing on these days, albeit without their original players. "We're not disbanded," says former guitarist **Paul Q-Pek**. "A lot of people think that the band has broken up since I left."

"There's a rumor going around that we've broken up," says bass player **Daniel Tucek**. "It's been going around ever since we started."

"Jesus, family, church, and God's calling are all more important than Christian music or **One Bad Pig**," says Womack. "Our prayer is to be obedient and faithful to God's calling and to wait on the Lord." Only God knows what the future holds for the band.

You may have noticed the

"GUTS" t-shirt worn by **Bride** drummer **Jerry McBroom** on the cover of the last issue of HM. Guts Ministries operates a street outreach in Tulsa, Oklahoma, which uses a flatbed hay truck as a portable stage -- taking Jesus to the parking lots and hangouts where masses of kids are. For more info, write: PO Box 471393, Tulsa, OK 74147; or call (918) 622-4422.

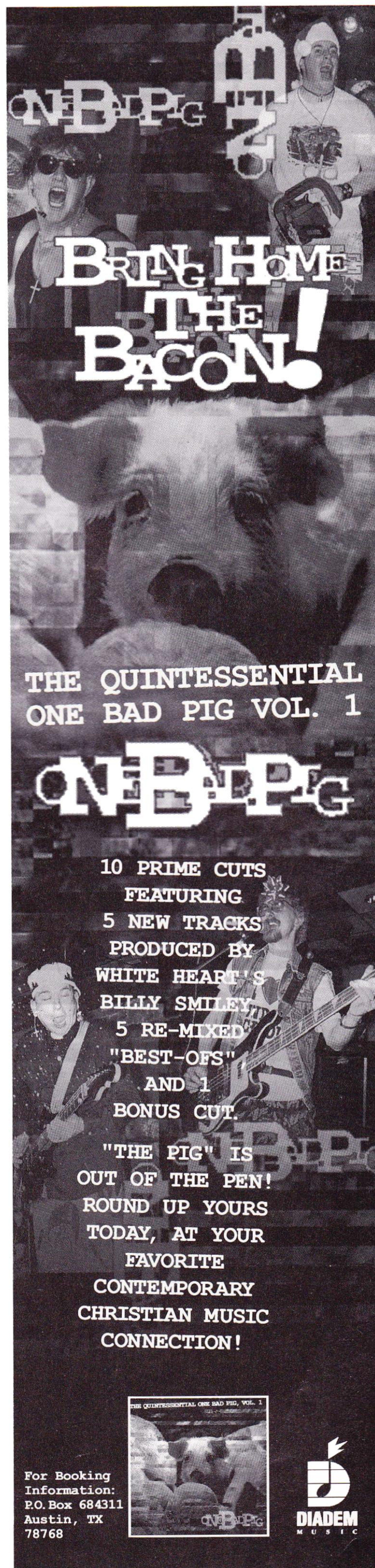
Petra recently returned from its successful European tour with **Jerusalem**. Beginning in Belfast, Ireland, Petra and Jerusalem performed 17 concerts in 10 countries in 21 days. On May 22nd in Forserum, Sweden, the bands sold out 5,000 seats. England's mainstream magazine *Kerrang!* had this to say about the Petra/Jerusalem show in Birmingham (Issue #498): "...When a band's message leaves their music for dead, something is very wrong. Despite the fact that this gig was not advertised in any rock press, there is a large audience varying from small children to elderly ladies. Less than 5% look like rock fans. Nevertheless, everyone claps, stamps and whoops. Petra are a quintet who play smooth, aerodynamic melodic rock with bursts of keyboards, mighty vocals and plenty of pomp and ceremony. It is all painfully irrelevant. No one in this audience gives a toss about rock music -- except, of course, when it involves a Christian message."

It's interesting to hear this perspective, isn't it? Maybe we can learn from this criticism...

The 77's and **The Prayer Chain** raised over \$12,000 for the Pediatric AIDS Coalition on their "Buzz Stop" Spring tour. This will help 50 Bay area children with AIDS and their families to take a weekend trip to Disneyland. The two bands will also accompany the PPAC on this trip, tentatively scheduled October 19th. The 19-city tour saw close to 11,000 people in attendance, with an average audience of 572 per night.

Both of **Agape's** rare and collectable albums are now available on CD. **Agape** is one of the early Christian rock pioneers, who released two albums, *Agape* and *Victims of Tradition*, in the early 70's (both of which go for over \$200 apiece on vinyl amongst collectors). For more info, write: **Agape Communications**, 2008 Aldermead Rd, Mississauga, Ontario, L5M-3A7, Canada.

Check this out: "I appreciate your cooperation in ceasing to proselytize during the performance upon our request. I deeply regret that you were misled by an RCC staff member to think that proselytizing was permissible at the event. While I respect and appreciate the reasons behind your band's existence, please understand it



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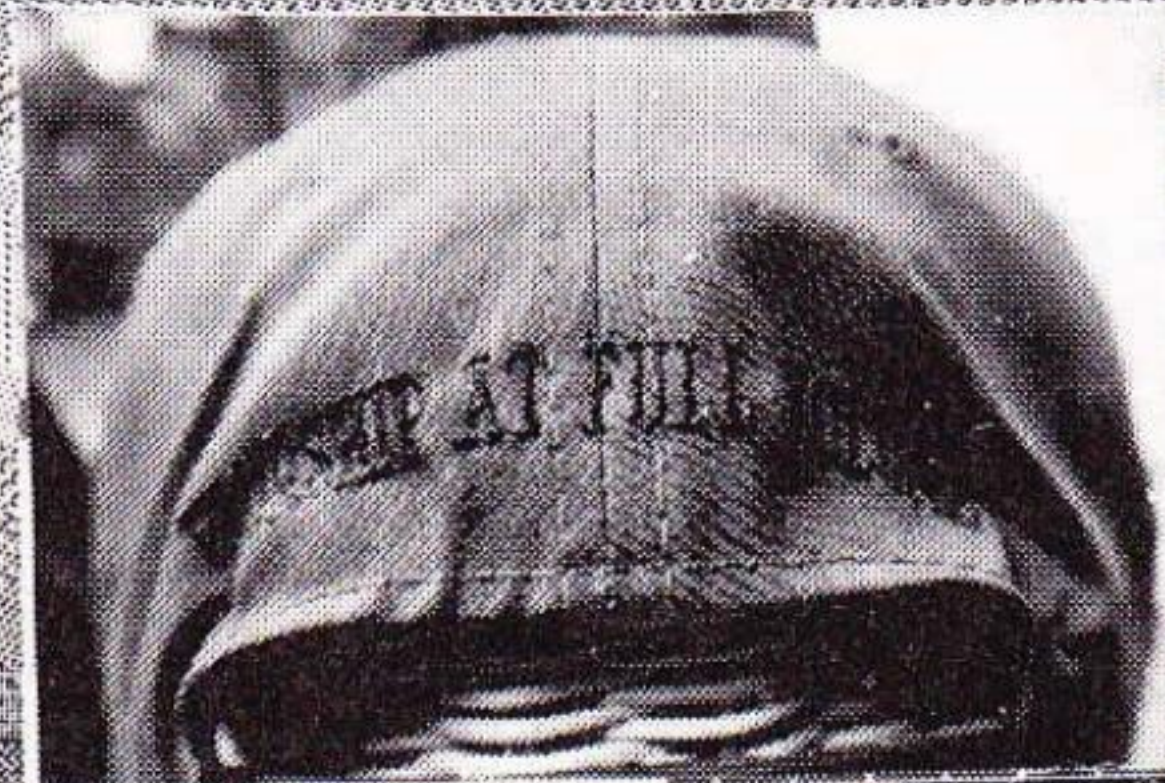
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is inappropriate in a government sponsored event. The Reston Community Center is a Fairfax County agency and is required to comply with separation of church and state in its activities."

This quote comes from a letter that was sent to **Crown of Thorns** by Bryn Pavak, the Executive Director of the RCC, concerning the band playing at the annual "Teen Fest," where Crown of Thorns has played the last two years. The band's response? "We're not playing next year. Why? God told us to minister the Gospel. We know that's what He called us to do. I don't know what He called anyone else to do. That's not my responsibility, it's theirs. As Christian musicians, artists, or whatever, we each need to know what God has told us to do and to go ahead and do it! That's the only way we will ever succeed (see Romans 8:28)."

Pat Bratcher of **L.O.U.D.** and his wife delivered a baby -- **Christian Destiny Bratcher**. Pat goes into public schools and puts on his "Too School For Cool" program. "I have my music on CD without guitar, so when I go in I've got the rest of the band on CD," explains Pat. He uses the obstacles he faced growing up --

from having to learn how to walk with leg braces to starting all four years of high school football, to being born without all of his digits to becoming a hot guitar player -- to prove that you can overcome any obstacle. Some of the schools he "ministers" in, and some he doesn't.

This summer WQKO will sign on-air in Howe, Indiana as the nation's first and only full-time Christian rock radio station on the FM band!

Comedian **Paul Aldrich** was recently selected to be a guest for the upcoming Fall tour of "Comic Belief," featuring **Mark Lowry** and **Chondra Pierce**.

Ninth Hour's debut album should now be out. For info, write: 1459 Keyway Road, Englewood, FL 34223.

Lust Control found a new guitarist in **Scott Parker**, a transplanted Houstonian.

Avenger has signed a recording deal with Superb Sound Records of Jacksonville, Florida. A full-length CD will be available in six to eight months. They are currently gigging around North Florida. For booking info, call (904) 786-9628.

The Refuge has opened a new church in North Tampa, which has already hosted concerts by Circle of Dust and Mortal. Their new address is: 7809 North Orleans, Tampa, FL 33604.

A rock and roll church and presentation troupe called "Mission X," is coming to Austin, Texas next Spring. For more info, call (512) 209-1577.

A new label, called Freedom Records, has launched with Diamante Distribution. The flagship band will be **The Kry**. You can contact Freedom at: 229 Ward Circle #B-21, Brentwood, TN 37027.

Blood Covenant is looking for a bass player, as they trim down to a trio and go after a truly heavy sound, rather than just mindless speed. Look for a new demo soon. For info, write: PO Box 103, Pocahontas, VA 24635.

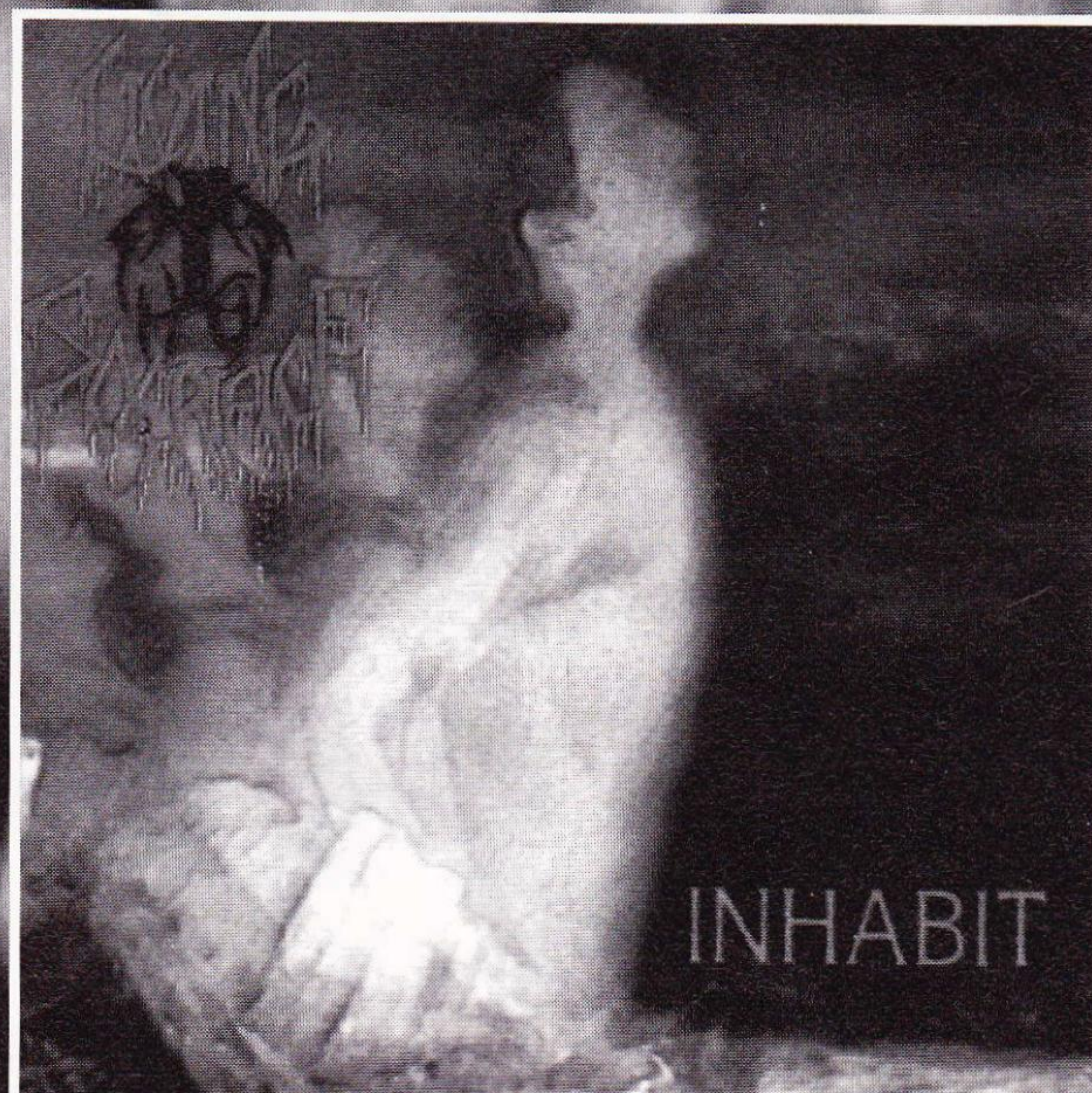
In the "new technology" department, Heaven's Metal is now offering a fax service for those of you wanting to catch up or reference a specific article from a past issue. For \$2 we will fax you any two articles from a previous issue of HM.

HM

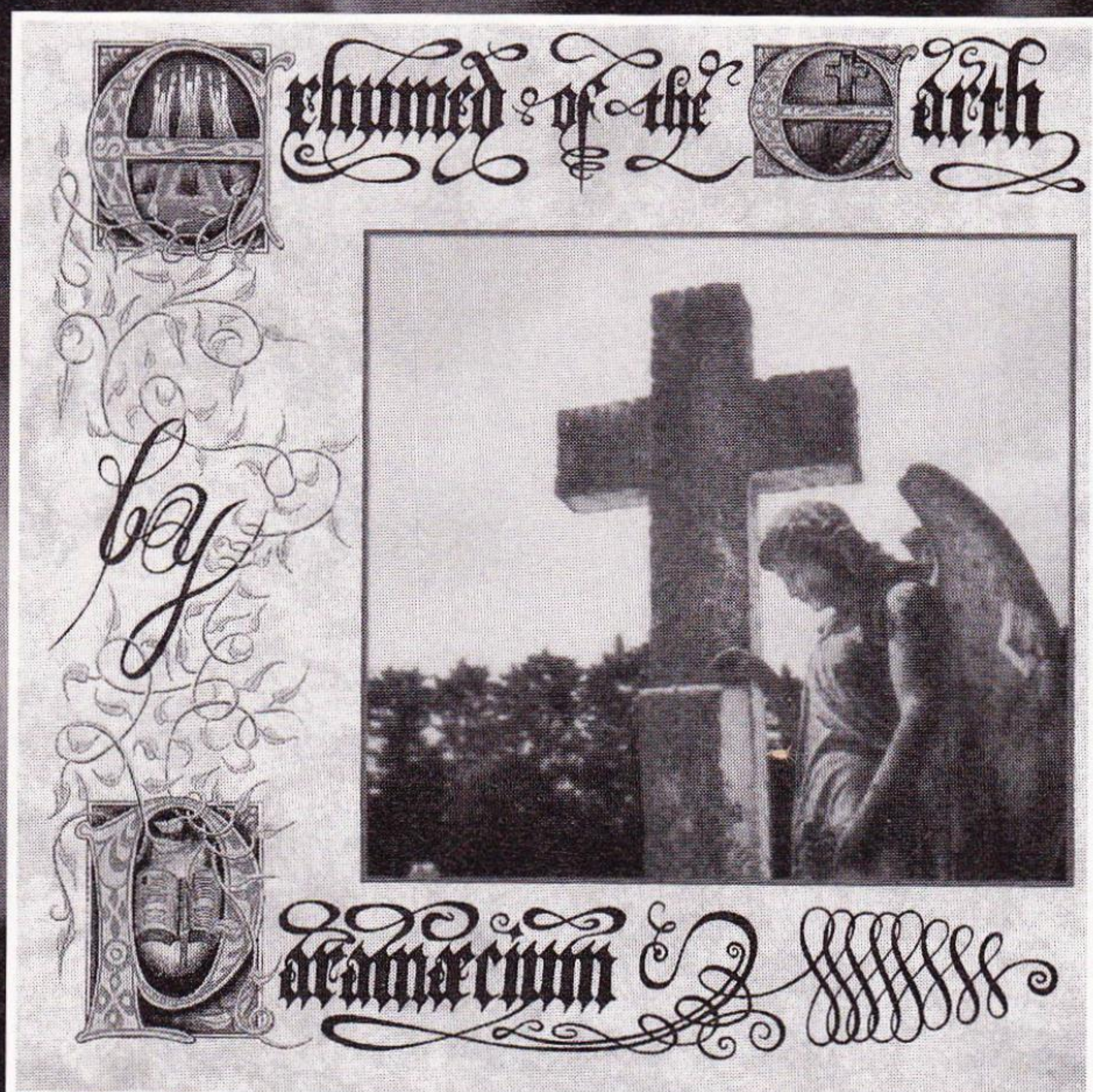
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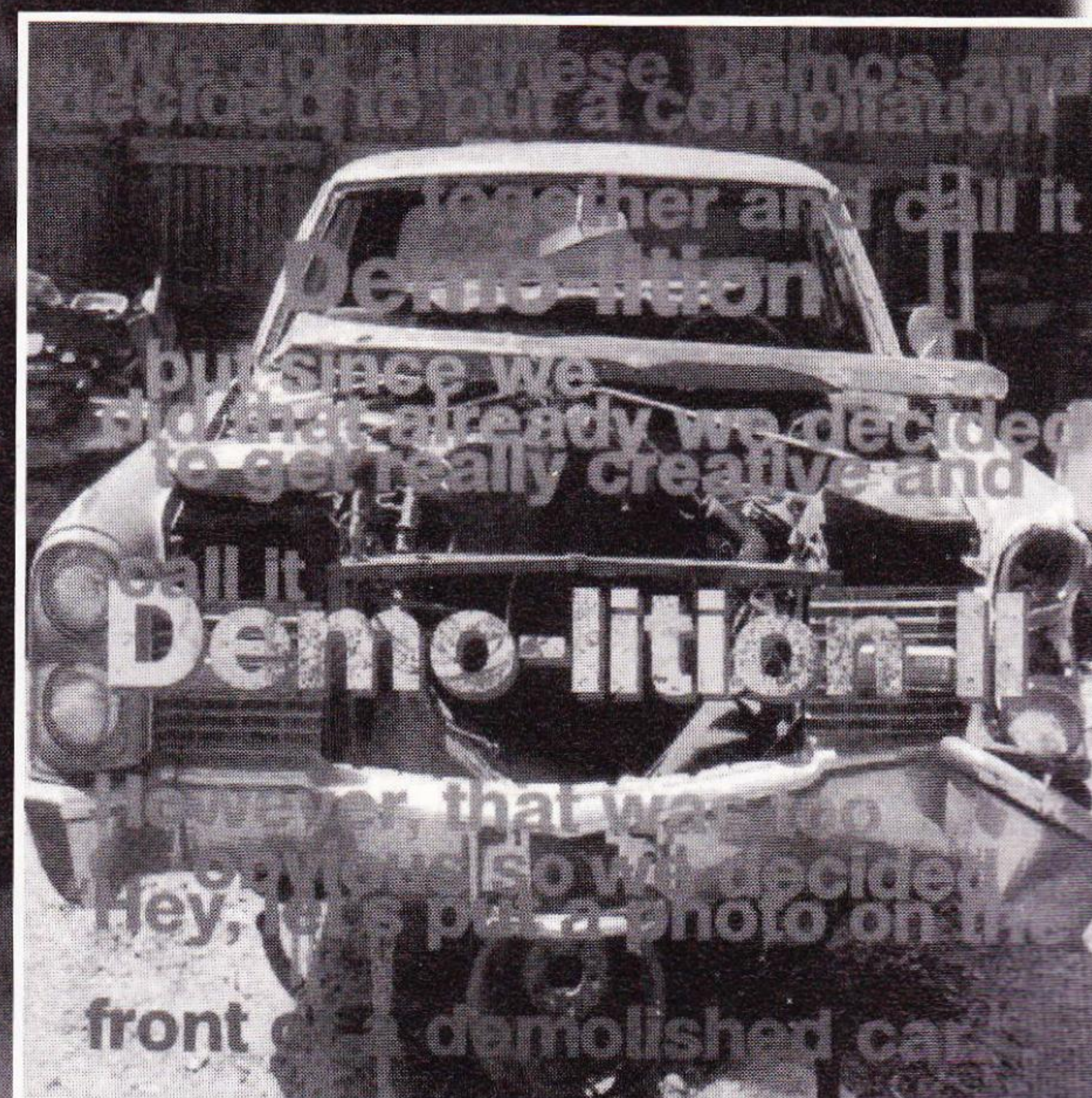
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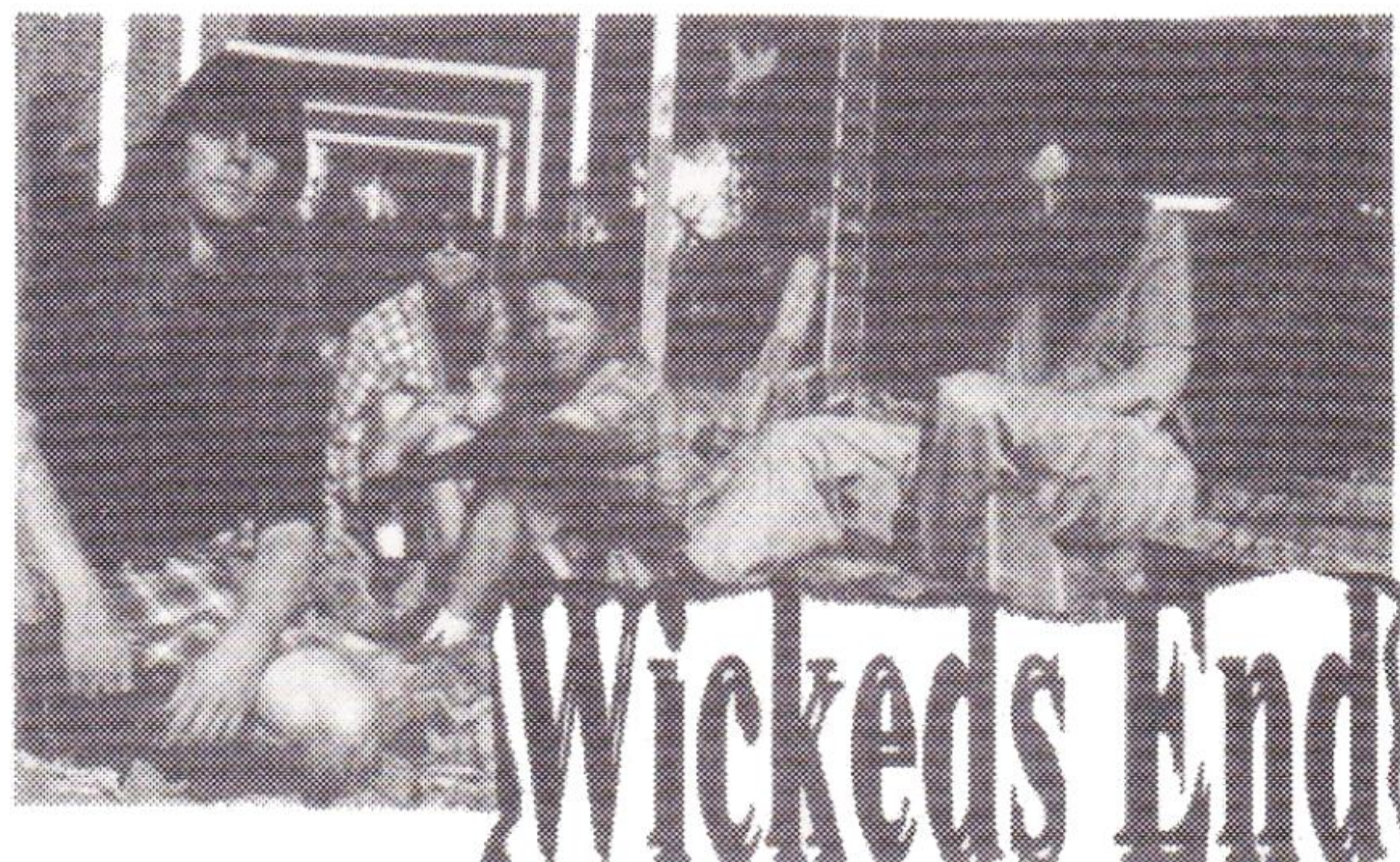
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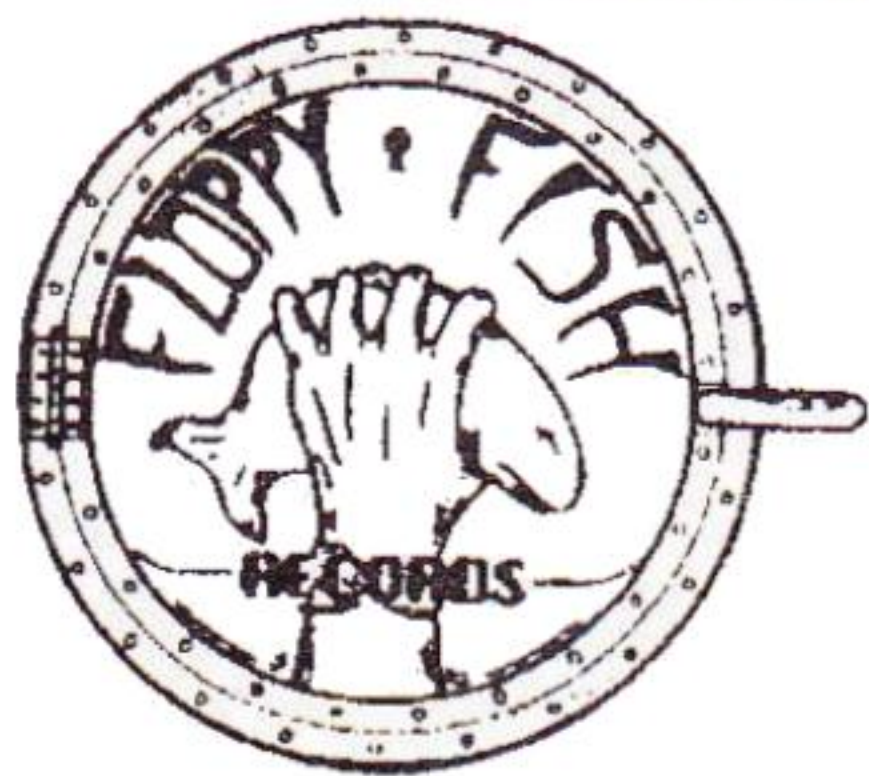


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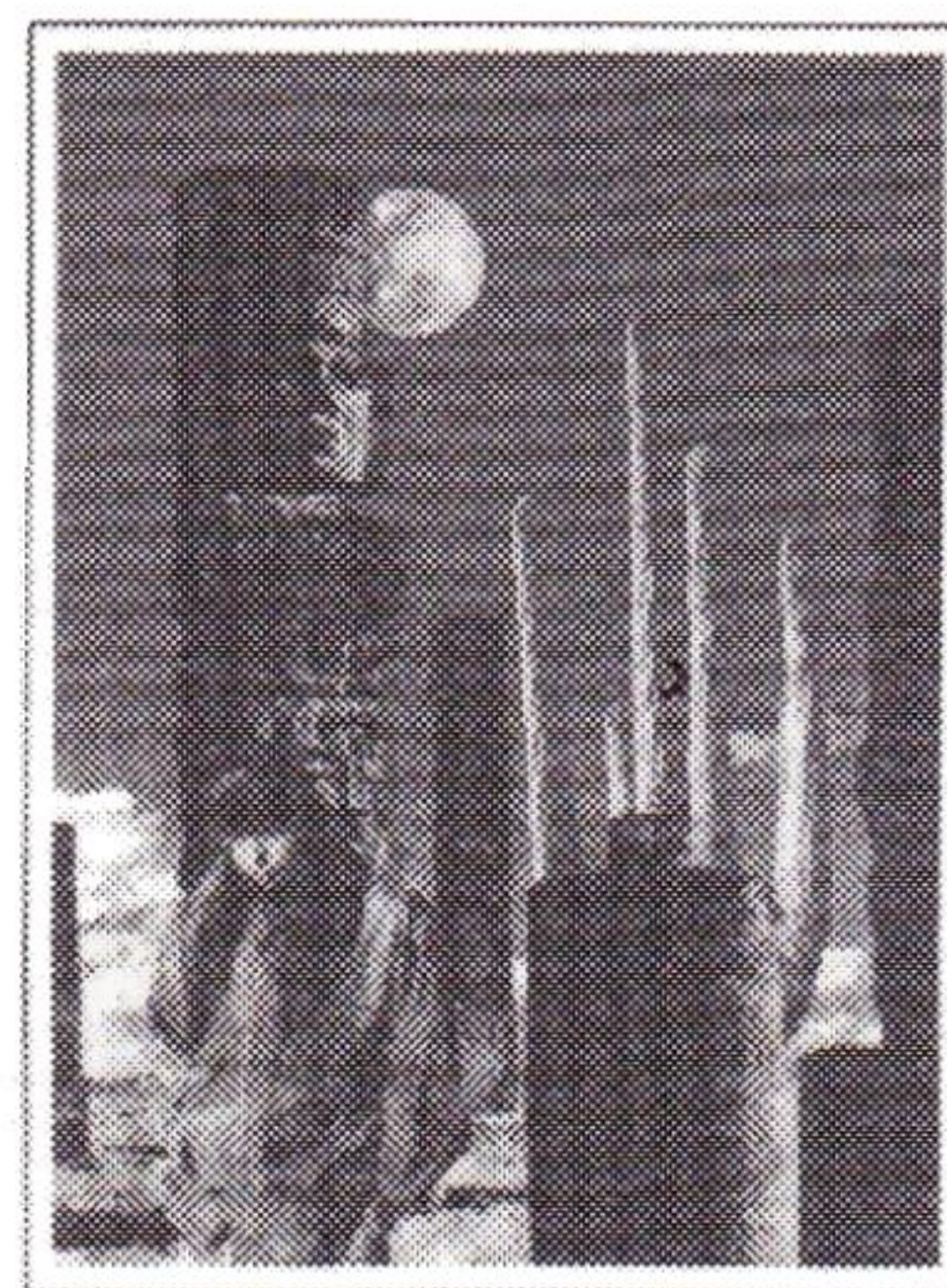


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Concert Reviews

MICHAEL SWEET

On May 7, 1994, Michael Sweet & Band (Scott, Dennis, Jamie, and Paul) came to Cincinnati, Ohio for the Spirit Song Festival. Michael, along with Audio Adrenaline, opened for DC Talk. The concert was delayed for over two hours; but, when Michael came on, it was definitely worth the wait.

Michael & band started the short set (six songs altogether and a bonus song later) with "Together." He started out with his famous scream (seven years since I had heard it live) and they quickly won over the crowd. Next he got the audience (between 7 and 10,000) going with "J.E.S.U.S." and "Take Me Home." These were both done tremendously, and Michael was proving himself as a solo artist to everyone. After these songs came some Stryper classics.

Michael asked, "How many of you remember an album called *To Hell With The Devil* by a group called Stryper?" The audience responded with a loud applause and Michael & band tore into the song "Free." After that came the other classic Stryper song, "Honestly." It was beautifully done and the audience loved it. Next came the final song of his set -- "Ain't No Safe Way." It was certainly the highlight song of the night, and Michael had the audience yelling, "Hey, hey," with the band jammin' away and, once again, Michael screaming at the top of his lungs.

Later in the night came a surprise performance by Michael. He joined DC Talk for "Time Is..." It was great to see Michael do this song, because it showed a different side of him -- dancing up there with DC Talk and trying to keep up.

Overall, it was an A+ performance for Michael Sweet & Band. The new material is a lot better live and the addition of the Stryper songs made his set list full of hits. It was an exciting and high energy performance. Thanks, Michael. It is good to see you performing again.

--Brian Rodgers

Dig Hay Zoose & Hot Pink Turtle

Not too long ago I had the privilege of seeing D.H.Z., Hot Pink Turtle and Grimwig at the New Union in Minneapolis. It was one gnarly experience! All three bands sounded really good. The bass resounded, the walls shook, the



floor bounced, and the crowd rumbled to the highly energetic tunes.

Grimwig (a local band) opened the show and the crowd up to a totally fun evening of toe-tappin' hip swayin' and pogo hoppin' grooves! Hot Pink Turtle came next with a real live show full of enthusiasm. Towards the beginning of their set, while the band was just groovin' away, HPT's singer got a little wrapped up in the music -- dancin' hoppin' swayin' and slingin' his hair as he tumbled right into the drumset. It was so funny how he fell, got up and passed it all off as if this was nothing new. I about busted a gut! They carried through with a happy lineup.

For the finale came a bustin' performance by Dig Hay Zoose. They put on a show bigger than life. I'd say the climax of the night came when D.H.Z. played "Dad." The crowd went off! The pogo pit consumed the whole crowd on the main floor. No joke -- I thought the floor might bust. D.H.Z. put on one of the most intense and enjoyable shows I've ever seen (an intensity comparable to the Crucified -- R.I.P.).

Overall, the night was very passionate and beautiful, from the bands and the crowd alike.

--Frank Franzen

Precious Death

On March 26th, Calvary Chapel of Marysville put on a totally ragin' show with Spirit Pharmacy and Precious Death. Spirit Pharmacy came up first, with their

Christopher Scott

Dead Pharisee's Photography

ethereal, weird, neo punk/alternative/thrash tunes. One great thing about this band is that they really don't sound like anyone else! The highlight of their set that evening was when Mike played his bluegrass fiddle music. The crowd went nuts! Spirit Pharmacy is a must-see new band that will please just about any type of crowd.

Precious Death hit the stage like a nuclear assault! Christopher Scott has got to be one of the hottest frontmen on planet earth. His stage antics had everyone losing it! Yes, folks, he leaps, he dives, he splits, and helicopters with the best of them. During "Force Fed" he beat a TV to death -- shelling glass all over the church stage (I hate my MTV!)

Dave Bishop's leads were very tight, and he crunched the crowd all night long with his bone-crushing power chords. Andy Koehler's bass riffs rivaled anything from bands like Pearl Jam and Faith No More. Roger Sampson is an incredibly talented drummer, who is very versatile and extremely quick with his triplets and double kicks!

Chris and Roger both shared the Word in a very intelligent and challenging way with many of the Generation X crowd. I led the altar call, and over two dozen young people accepted Christ! The angels were rejoicing as the kids came forward to get right with the Lord. All in all, it was a good night!

--Pastor Fred Z.

ALBUM REVIEWS

RED SEA

Blood

Rugged

Every so often you run into a singer with "that voice." He or she has that God-given ability to shake loose all the power a song can muster. Robyn Kyle of Red Sea has one such voice. Put him with a powerhouse songwriter and guitarist like Chris Howell and you've got a deadly combination. I hear David Coverdale's got his old lineup of Whitesnake back together...Well, he better write some great songs, because Red Sea is settin' the standards now.

"Wolves at the Door" is a classic performance that lives up to the old blues standards of lots of groove, good story tellin' and delivered with true blues soul. What's great about this song is that this description could fit both the vocal and guitar delivery! I bet Chris smiles when he plays tunes like this. Songs like this and "Hellbound Train" tell tales that expound on the simpler points of the Gospel (ie. the brokenness of sin and the reality of Hell). Not one to rip off his influences, but to truly incarnate them, Red Sea does it all up with its closing number -- a heartfelt Gospel song called "Tears of Joy" -- complete with some female background singers.

Fans of the red-hot hard rock of Guardian and Bride are gonna feel like they made a new best friend.

--Doug Van Pelt

WHITECROSS

Unveiled

R.E.X.

Make no mistake, this new release by Whitecross qualifies as a comeback attempt. All of the ingredients are here: new members, new record label, and, most of all, a couple of disappointing

(even, at times, boring) records in dire need of a rebound. Unlike many, Whitecross has much to rebound to. Namely, its status as one of Christian metal's most successful bands. But, with the departure of crowd favorite Rex Carroll, who no doubt inspired a generation of bedroom air guitarists, vocalist Scott Wenzel and company have their work cut out for them.

To go hand-in-hand with the new aspects of *Unveiled* seems to be a decided change in approach. While all the Whitecross albums previous were basically of the Scott, Rex and Two-Revolving-Musicians theory of making the most of individual talents, *Unveiled* is the first record that sounds like a band. As in four guys settling into a groove, complementing each other's strengths and filling in for weaknesses -- not just a great guitar lick, an outstanding vocal take and...well, um...you get the picture. Wenzel has definitely matured in this area, as he sounds more controlled -- and in control -- than ever before, all while regaining a vocal bite that had been MIA for a several few years. *Unveiled* is undoubtedly Wenzel's finest performance to date; subtlety is indeed a wonderful thing.

The songs themselves range from fantastic to mediocre. "Salt City" and "Home in Heaven" are both driving, powerhouse rockers cut from the same cloth as recent Bride -- where the band is a unit and the ending comes too quickly. "Come Into The Light," though, never reaches the elusive "click point," and fizzles out soon after it starts. "Angel's Disguise" shows some lyrical depth, urging the listener to look beyond the clothing and appearance and into the heart of people, as God does. "King of Angels," though, smells like the calcu-

lation of *In The High Kingdom Gear*. Is it just me, or does Whitecross have more crowd-participation numbers than a "Wave your hands in the air like you just don't care" rap posse?

When *Unveiled* scores, it can be traced back to substance. "Goodbye Cruel World" is a mid-tempo 70's jam that drips of Led Zeppelin, and it's here more than any other where Whitecross sounds like a gritty, blue-collar band playing for its life. For all we know, it may be.

--Brent Hershey

TOURNIQUET

Vanishing Lessons

Intense

The new Tourniquet album holds high the excellent standard the band is known for. Amid all the rumors of "drastic musical change," let it be known that this album is as heavy as the green monster pictured on the cover.

"Bearing Gruesome Cargo" starts things off with a ripping mocker/rebuke of people who blame others for their own sin. The chorus hook of "This is why I am the way that I am" is infectious. If it weren't for the stern lecture in the lyrics, I'd find myself repeating the chorus to everyone without thinking. Great hook.

The biggest change noticeable here is the inclusion of a couple songs that sound like something you'd hear in a format other than during your local radio's "bone-crunching metal hour." The biggest musical departure is in "Twilight," a melancholy rocker reminiscent of a late 60's Manfred Mann tune. Lyrically, it's a heartbreaking and strong rebuke about "locking our priceless heritage away/ Our kin the elderly." Next time you think about putting your parents/grandparents in a

nursing home, read these lyrics!

"My Promise" is another stylistic flavor Tourniquet tries out here for the first time -- a melodic ballad with touching lyrics about a new husband explaining to his new step-son that he will be his father now. A touching sentiment and song that provides a dynamic contrast as it punches in with the whole band halfway through.

"Sola Christus" is an all-out Tourniquet progressive jam with screaming guitars and lyrics that declare "Christ alone completed me." These guys keep getting better and better at slamming down thoughtful one-liners. The majority of the songs here find the band in top form. Luke Easter's first Tourniquet album finds him settling into a groove about as comfortable as the ones the rhythm section keeps digging. The only times he seems to get off track are the extend-a-note moments in the title track and "Bearing Gruesome Cargo," yet the sound fits the frenetic pace of these songs well. Like other recordings, drummer Ted Kirkpatrick plays some of the guitar leads, which, along with Gary Lenaire's, sound diverse and tasteful. You'd swear that they hired a jazz/blues master to come in and do the second lead in "Pecking Order."

"Drowning Machine" and "Acid Head" set the records here for deepest groove. "Drowning..." gets things going with some throbbing bass, some talk box and crunchy guitar lines. The chorus is an anthemic chant that almost hypnotizes with power and tone. "Acid Head" got plenty of stage time on the band's latest tour, and proved to be a great groove rocker that slams like a heavyweight boxer. By the song's title, you'd think this is about LSD, but it covers the wasted life of



RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

BY PAUL DOTY

THE SOUNDMAN FOR BARREN CROSS & BLOODGOOD SPEAKS OUT

"A wonderful testimony to what God said He was all along; 'good, gracious, faithful, loving, and true.' A book filled with encouragement and instruction, as Paul gives us a glimpse at what has happened between he and the risen and living Jesus on their Emmaus road. A genuine treat. Wonderful. Excellent. I am blessed."

--Damian Kyle
Pastor Calvary Chapel, Modesto

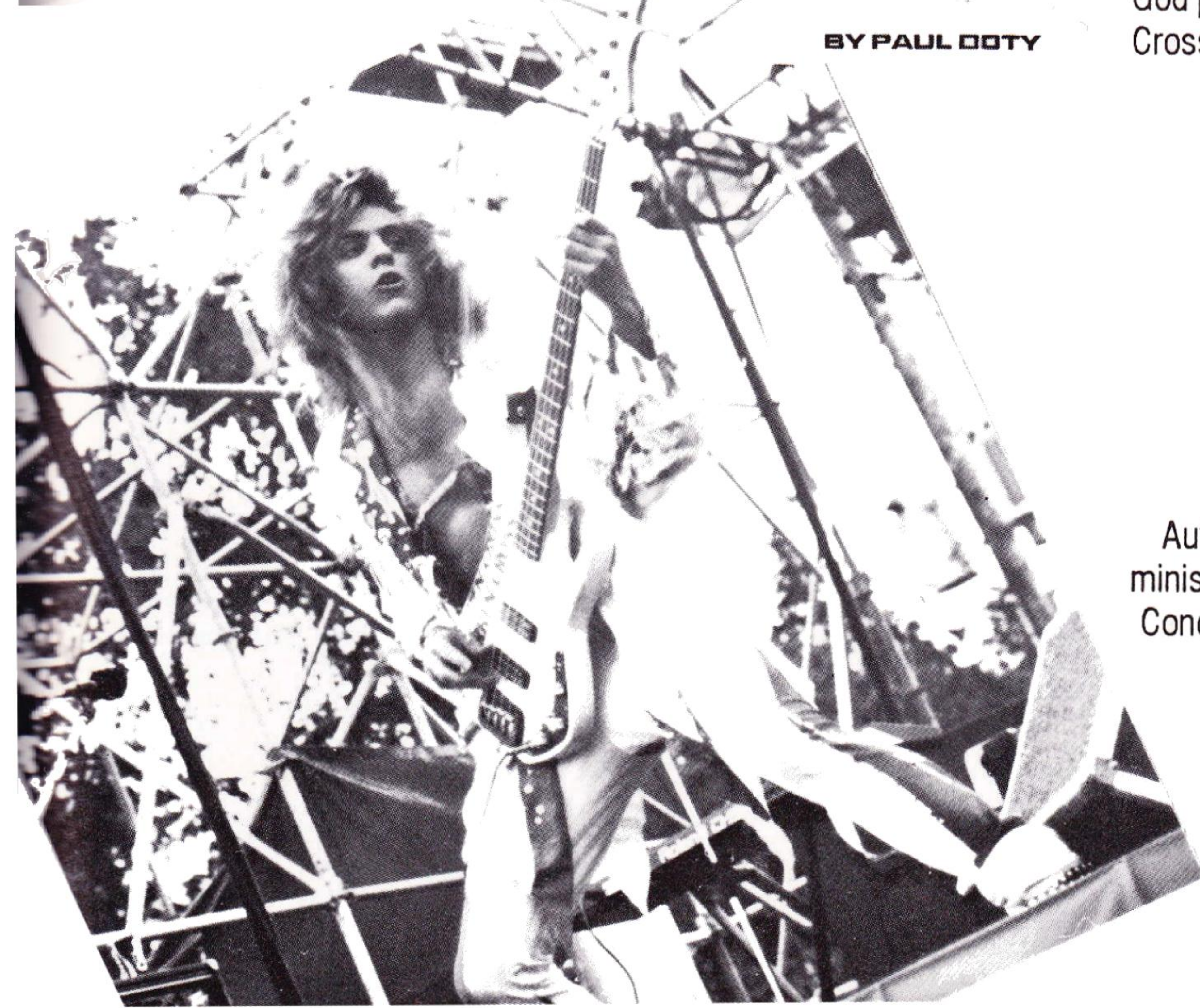


"I embrace this book as a publisher, because it fits perfectly with the vision I have for Heaven's Metal Magazine. It shares testimony of how God will work with and provide for heavy metal musicians and sound engineers, and it reveals the hearts of these music missionaries. Rubber Meets The Road is aptly titled, because it deals in reality and graphically destroys the myth that Christian hard rock music touring is glamorous. These myths are destroyed rapidly in the first four chapters ... and then you get to Chapter Five -- 'War Stories!' If you think you've had a bad day in your life, you ain't read nothin' yet! I think God is going to use this book to testify of His greatness, as well as offering wisdom to those artists trying to go out and see God perform 'even greater works' than He did through Barren Cross and Bloodgood."

--Doug Van Pelt
Heaven's Metal Magazine

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a boy who drinks sulfuric acid.

A couple of tunes could've just as easily found themselves on the self-titled Metallica album -- "Pushin' Broom," which plods with a heaviness factor of 10 and features an array of sounds thrown in guitar tones and in the rhythm. The soft vocals of the chorus conjure up the Metallica school of sound dynamics. In "Your Take," fellow Bay Area resident Luke Easter does a good James Hetfield attitude-filled vocal delivery, plus the guitars are as biting as a hungry shark.

The album's benchmark will probably be the creative instrumental, "K517," where Ted does a great job at showing that the drums are a musical instrument capable of several different flavors. Set to a Bach-like harpsichord solo, Ted wails away at mostly toms to accentuate the quick runs of the harpsichord. Not many drum solos can capture your attention and keep it all the way through, but this one does.

Tourniquet has done it again -- forging intelligent lyrics into a new alloy of steel-hardened metal that's sure to please discriminate musicians and music fans.

--DV

CHATTERBOX *Despite*

Tooth & Nail

Chatterbox is a new band, but check a little closer -- a few of the contributors are anything but rookies. Jeff Bellew is the most obvious -- the former Crucified bassist gets partial or whole songwriting credits on each of the album's original cuts. The producer is another recognizable name: Scott Albert of Circle of Dust, and a bit of guessing should net listeners with the identity of percussionist and one song vocalist King Salomon.

It's accurate to describe Chatterbox as a more modern-sounding Crucified, though that's certainly not say-

ing The Crucified needed a facelift. While the processed vocals and heavy percussion might initially lean the band toward an industrial tag, *Despite* is void of the sampling overload that a *Brainchild*-era Circle of Dust or Generation employ to create their version of sonic chaos. "Spine," "Divide" and "Epignosis" obviously have their roots in traditional hardcore, and could easily be Crucified songs in disguise. In other tracks, such as "Empty," Bellew and company build upon a single guitar lick and take a more traditional songwriting approach that works partially from Albert's powerful production.

The lyrical similarity between a Chatterbox and The Crucified is also notable -- again, it's nothing to be ashamed of; The Crucified's mature understanding of speaking the truth in love is far too rare in this industry. "Torque" and "Empty" both address how people all search for meaning, and are far too eager to latch onto something that seems worthy, rather than He Who is worthy. "Soulscum" looks further inward, identifying the trappings of convincing yourself that you can do it alone, and how to start over ("Cleanse yourself of yourself"). "Fallen" is where the album's title is derived, and the reminder of the joy of God's mercy and unconditional love through our struggles. "Despite our weakness/Despite our doubts/Despite our failings/Despite our sin/Forgiveness waits/With arms outstretched/Return to Him."

The songs, including the album's closer, a Chatterbox version of "You are my sunshine/My only sunshine," emit a hope of a love that somehow conquers all. Chatterbox is certainly not the bratty little know-it-all that is normally associated with its name. Instead of the urge to slap him/her silly, this group deserves all the talk time it can get. Chatter on.

--BH

SOMETIME SUNDAY

Stone

Tooth & Nail

The greatest thing Tooth & Nail Records has done to date is to sign Sometime Sunday. Brandon Ebel should consider giving the band complete ownership of the label. In other words, Sometime Sunday's debut album, *Stone*, surpasses the word "incredible" by infinity. Seattle can only hope to be this good.

No overdubs, no effects, no cheesy background vocals that a lot of bands can't reproduce live... What you have here on this album is what you will get from this band live. Let it be said here first that it takes a lot of guts to be as raw and as in-your-face as *Stone*. Eddie Vedder and his padres sound like fat cats sippin' milk compared to these lurch rockers.

Mikee's guttural screams, melodic melodies and passionate delivery put him in the forefront of dominating front men in the 1990's. Kevin shreds his fanatical fretwork with glimpses of Hendrix. Zip and Jean-Pierre have what it takes to become one of the greatest supporting casts in history. Jean-Pierre is not even the full-time drummer of the band, but maybe after hearing these flattering words, he'll realize what he's missing out on.

Lyrical, *Stone* doesn't beat around the bush. Some songs are like swallowing a horse pill. Topics such as lust, pride, loneliness and suicide will allow God to speak to many people right where they are. The key word here is "honesty."

Sometime Sunday included three songs ("Blur," "Rope" and a drive-by acoustic version of "Home") off its demo, *Pain*. If the readers of HM and the fans of SS will bug the band enough, maybe Mikee and his crew will release *Pain* on CD. If you don't particularly care about having *Pain* on CD, bug them for my

benefit.

Stone has hit stores full-force across this great land of ours. If you don't already own it, you're either deaf or broke. Go ahead and save money for the second release now, because Sometime Sunday is here to stay. You can't stop it, you can only hope to contain it.

--Andy Crump

KING JAMES

Star Song

You heard the news:

Rex Carroll leaves Whitecross, joins up with ex-Sacred Fire vocalist Jimi Bennett, and then recruits ex-Stryper players Robert Sweet and Tim Gaines to play drums and bass; they record an album named after a Bible version; the record company slaps one in the mail, and now it sits on your desk... What do you do? Like any other fan of Christian hard rock music, you're as curious as a cat, 'n' you pop the tape in!

The lead-off track, "Hard Road To Go," sounds like the perfect Scorpions song musically. Like the German supergroup, this sound stays locked in a time warp of the dated 80's metal genre, but hey, it's done right. It's a great lead-off track, because it definitely serves as a foretaste of the diversity to come. You've got a driving rhythm, blazing leads, anthemic BGV's on each chorus, and Robert's tasty drum fills. A fabulous flamenco and electric harmony precede the flamenco solo during the bridge.

The diversity of this album's contents may be too much for one listener to digest, but the several parts make up for a good whole. There's some really good textures sewn throughout, with lead lines playing a melody separate but complimentary to the rhythm in either electric note stretching or fine acoustic picking and strumming.

Lyrical, we cover a lot of direction as well, from the story of one brother ratting on another in a drug bust ("Hard Road To Go"), to deal-

MISSION OF MERCY
yonderboy

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etcetera
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ing with suffering ("Miracles"), to reaffirming out identity in Christ ("Rev. Rider").

The "Acoustic Remix of Miracles" is a beautiful ballad that bleeds of emotion. It towers over the electric version (an unusual move to include both versions on one album, eh?), because the BGV's in the acoustic version aren't as polished up and Nashvilled-out, if you know what I mean. The electric version fits better in a TNN Country format and the acoustic version would go down well on MTV Unplugged. It's quite a memorable song.

Some of the album's lowest points are in "Touch The Fire" and "Love is Gonna Find You," which both have that Nashville "CHR-Heaven" stamp on it. "Sunrise in Rio" is a highlight, a very cool flamenco guitar instrumental that is ultra clean. It could have just as easily been on an Al Dimeola album. "Face to Face (Reprise)" sounds just like the old Scorpions song "Born To Touch Your Feelings," with layers and layers of a girls voice speaking atop some wailing guitars and a throbbing beat.

While undoubtedly a candidate for comparisons to his past work with Whitecross, Rex Carroll and company have created a good serving of emotional melodic hard rock that should appeal to the Whitecross fans who especially liked the band's commercial appeal. While King James has the potential to grab a large audience due to its accessibility, it is doubtful that the fist-pounding headbanger will latch on to it.

--DV

VARIOUS

Helpless Amongst Friends

Tooth & Nail

Whoa, dude! Want to numb your skull with intensity? Here's 16 bands with a song each, and each of 'em play it as if it really mattered. Even though this hardcore movement can become a trend and be a copycat sellout, it promotes gut-level honesty in its lyrics and vocal delivery, which is moving. What else is cool is that the guitar and bass sounds are full -- giving the old school hallow guitar sound some powerful metal beef.

A couple tunes that stand out are: "Reign Forever" by Focused, which features a passionate intro reminiscent of the spoken intro to their *Bow* album; and "Stench" by Crawlspace, which pulls off a cool lead sound that changes the whole mood of the song ending.

Sometimes compilation albums, especially when "limited" to a specific genre, can be a bad listen due to weak cuts weighing the rest of the material

down. While not every track is as intense as the Focused tune, you get 16 good tunes in a row here, making for an enjoyable listen from beginning to end.

--DV

MISSION OF MERCY

Yonder Boy

Etcetera

First Applehead, then Wish For Eden and Sometime Sunday came along in the Christian music scene to kick butt in the grunge genre. Now comes Mission of Mercy, who are very reminiscent of Soundgarden. While flannel is already on the way out, there's still a glut of followers relishing on the sounds of distorted bass, flanged guitars and melodic blues vocals. While it can be negative to be rushing in the white water of a wave that has broken, it can still offer a big thrill if it's good...and this record is great!

The vocals here, which are often shared with guest back-ups, are very good and on key. The music here has many textures, not just being heavy and moving, but also heady and progressive. The band has great pop sensibilities, as is evidenced by the killer melody in "What I Know," not too unlike the slow and hooky "Goldilox" or "Summerland" vibe by King's X. (Rumor has it that Doug Pinnick wanted to produce these guys...he is definitely a fan, having given me a copy of their demo two years ago.)

Besides crafting good songs, the band knows how to pen great lyrics that don't shy away from focusing on God. Amidst the heavy riffing in Colors, these Chicago boys borrow a line from Rez's "Afrikaans": "God makes the color, but the color doesn't make you God."

There's many good records to choose from right now, but this one is right up at the top with Red Sea, Tourniquet and *Helpless Amongst Friends*.

--DV

VARIOUS

Demo-Lition II

R.E.X.

Compared to the first *Demo-Lition* album, this one rules! Several sub-genres of hard music are well represented here. Hardcore is ruling the cutting edge scene right now, and this compilation of unsigned bands is certainly not absent of this movement. Mr. Bishop's Fist and Crucifix both attack their songs with a vengeance.

The industrial side of things takes the majority air time here, with several bearing the overwhelming Scott Albert sound stamp. Rivot, Klank, and

Argyle Park all were produced in part by Scott. All are suspect of being a front for another Scott Albert musical expression.

Leader Dogs For The Blind are a standout here, with a real heavy tune and an intense groove and passionate vocals. Thorn Crown makes a good showing with a grunge tune sure to make a flannel 'n' boots wearin' grandma proud. Scapegoat throws in their inventive two cent's worth with an attack on organized religion (a.k.a. "The System"). Unlike a non-believing or cynical look at it, this song also focuses on the centrality of a personal relationship with Jesus.

For a look at several independent groups, you can't go wrong by looking under the hood of this one.

--DV

SIX FEET DEEP

Struggle

R.E.X.

These Cleveland punks go after it for 50-plus minutes through a muddy mix for half the album, which never peaks beyond the wide mid-range plodding out of the speakers. Vocally, the deathly muffled sound is chosen over rawness. Some of these tunes, though, have grooves too cool to ignore, like the deep riffs in the title track and "Nemesis," where the sonics start to show a little separation, making the song heavier. The vocal trade-off in the chorus is real cool.

"Valley of Salt" is a cool adaptation of Psalm 69. As far as hardcore attitude is concerned, it's all found in "Homeless," a bold self declaration that the members of Six Feet Deep don't call this nation or this world home. It's full of sin and shame and they are citizens of a better place yet to come. This bleeds of the no-compromise, Biblical attitude that can't be dismissed with a wink, cause there's too much conviction behind it. Yeah! "Land of the Blind" has as much power in its ink as its music too. It grasps the pain of going against the grain.

Six Feet Deep packs a real hard punch.

--DV

GREG CHAISSON

It's About Time

Graceland

A rip-roarin' YOWZA goes out from Greg Chaisson on this release, a Texas blues, foot-stompin' album. Fans of those three Texans known as ZZ Top will dig these 12 tunes.

"Too Late To Pray" starts off the album with a real tip of the 10-gallon hat to Blind Willie Johnson and all those blues pioneers who belted out real simple Gospel lyrics -- "If I don't change, it will be too late to pray."

"It Ain't Me" could be called a ZZ Top rip-off, with its rambling bass line and gritty tube-induced guitar tone, but it's hot. Greg's vocals have a touch of soulful passion and a good dose of white boy honky tonk.

The showstopper of the album is "My Dark Ride," with its laid back groove and dramatic moment during the bridge. "I could hear the voice as clear as if someone was standing in the room," Greg speaks, "The voice said to believe in Him, and to pray, and not to judge all people by the few misguided ones I had been around lately." The song's dynamics help recreate the power of that moment in Greg's life.

It's good to see this genre getting the playing time it is. Greg and his buddies have done a pro job writing good tunes, and it sounds like they had a party doin' it. All 12 of these tunes would be great crowd pleasers live...so what's takin' ya so long to tour, boys?

--DV

THE KRY

You

Freedom

The Kry's debut (can you say Bryan Adams does heartland rock?) got the band immediate attention with its clean, yet gritty-vocal approach to pop rock -- good songs, great melodies and more than a little bit of energy. This follow-up, *You*, should help the band continue to win fans with every song played. This is rock and roll and, unfortunately for some Mortification fans, it's a little pretty.

Jean Luc's voice still has that other famous Canadian's trademark sound, and it's darn good. Almost any of these 11 songs would be the perfect ballad for a heavy melodic metal band. There's just enough cool guitar tone to rank these tunes as rock, even if they don't rock.

The most excellent tunes are "Lay Down Your Gods," a bold proclamation with a big, fuzzy bass sound about renouncing idolatry in our modern world; and "I Know Everything About You," a jangly guitar anthem about God knowing our faults and still loving us. These two Canucks and one American do up the old Blind Willie Johnson number, "Jesus is Comin' Soon" real good.

There ain't nuthin' like a good power ballad -- and these guys are made out of 'em.

--DV

SLEEPY RAY

Under The Mighty Blood

New Breed

The saying in this state is, "The stars at night are big and bright/Deep in the heart of Texas..." and this is right on the

same main blues vein. Five years ago I came to love the live blues sound here in Austin, Texas, which the legendary Stevie Ray Vaughan had a lot to do with, and you just can't seem to find that talent on tape. Until, of course, Sleepy Ray. This guy plays with great feeling. Pick up a strat and go get 'em Ray!

Under The Mighty Blood starts right off with a good twist of the train blues flavor with a Gospel touch in the song "Station to Station," which states, "If you don't know your destination/Just get aboard this train/Cause this just might be the last time...that it'll pass this way again."

"Greatest of These," a slow, laid back jam that just brings alive the greatest commandment that the Lord gave, "But of faith, hope, and love, love is the greatest of these." In blues, you hear all kinds of stories, yet on "Ain't Talkin' About It," Sleepy Ray just puts his message both in the playing and the words. That's honesty and talent! You get them both and a whole lot more.

Overall, the only downfall is I haven't seen him live, and when the tape ends I have to get up and turn it over; yet it's all worth the experience and, with mostly everything that comes from the New Breed family, there is a sense of worship. Taking a listen to this album under any sky can bring you into the presence of God. When it's over, say a big "Amen!" and play it again.

--Charles Gates

VARIOUS

The Blues Night

Forefront

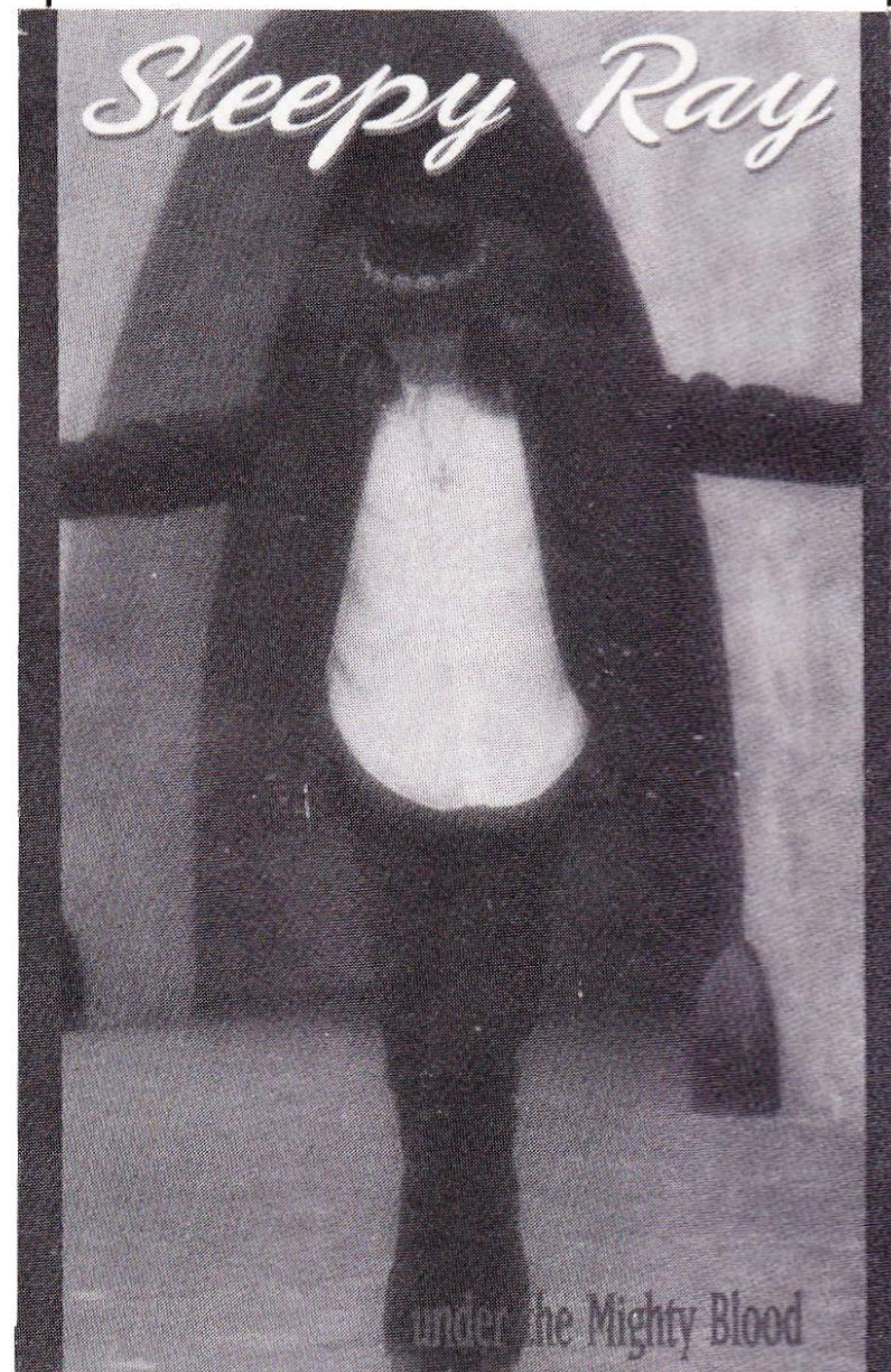
One thing you find out by all the Christian artists doing old "preaching" blues standards is that classic hard rock bands in the past used to rob the catalogs of blues greats like Blind Willie Johnson. An example everyone has heard already is the tune "Nobody's Fault But Mine," of which the living members of Led Zeppelin unjustly receive tons of royalties off of. Another example is right here on track number one - "Boom Boom." Pat Travers got all sorts of airplay on this tune back in the 70's (though he admitted it wasn't his tune).

This live album features Larry Howard, Glenn Kaiser, Darrell Mansfield and often overlooked rocker Trace Balin. Recorded in Holland last year, we get no overdubs -- just what was laid down that night. I'm not sure what the temperature was that night, but it sounds hot to me. An awesome moment comes in Glenn's set, where he strums the opening riffs to "Great Change" and this blues-lovin' audience starts clappin' and singing the words.

One thing about these old "authentic nods" to the blues masters is they

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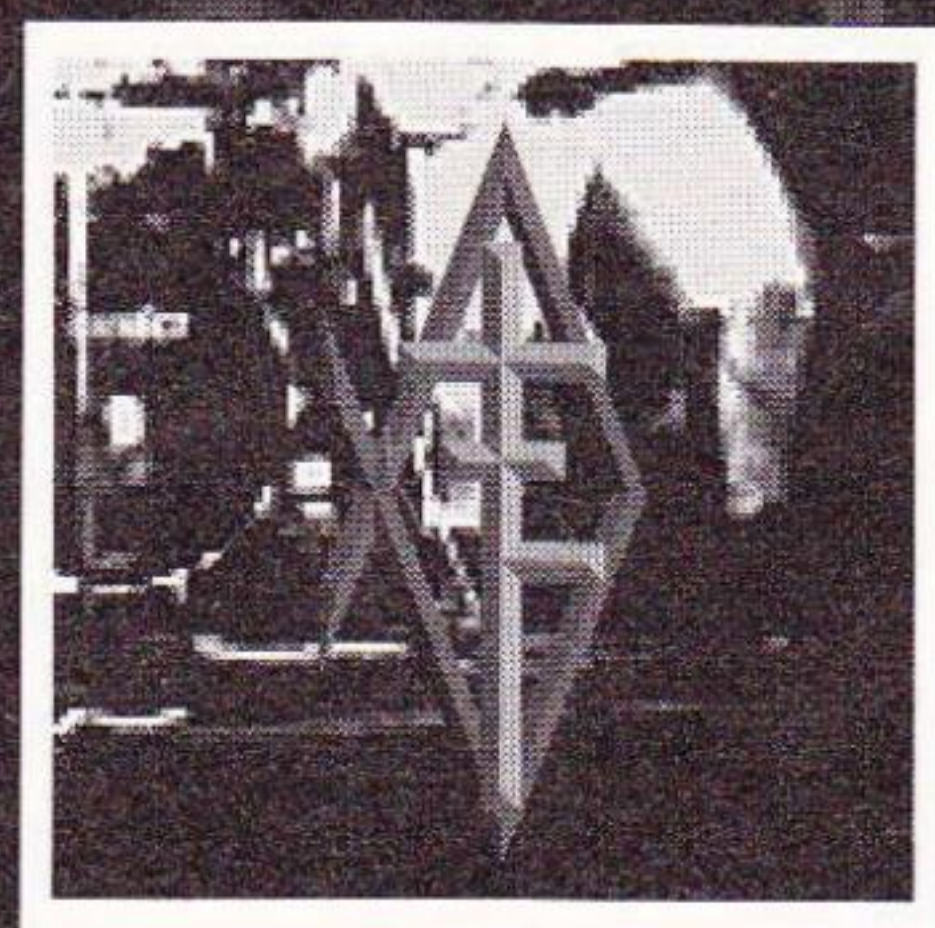
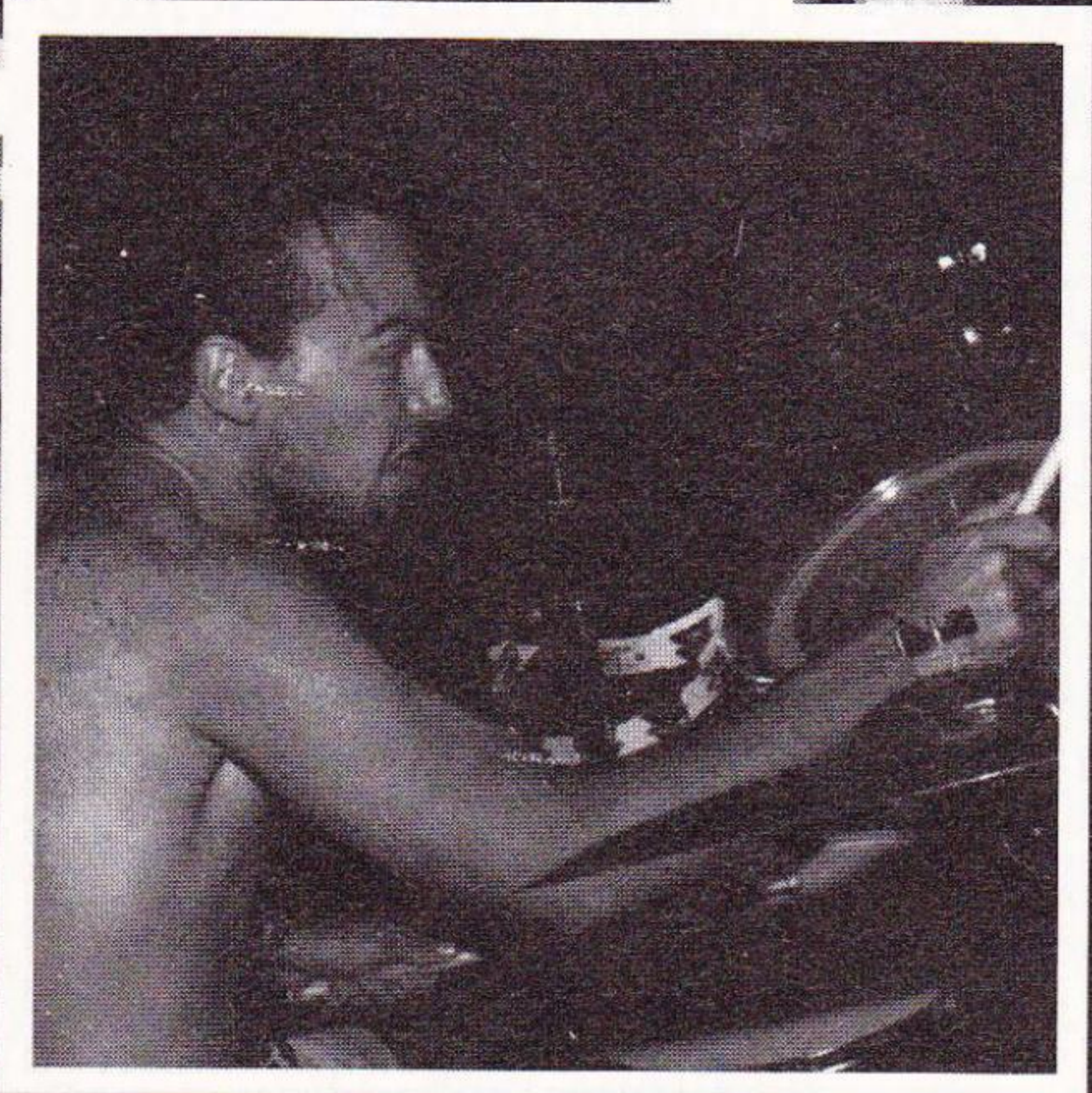
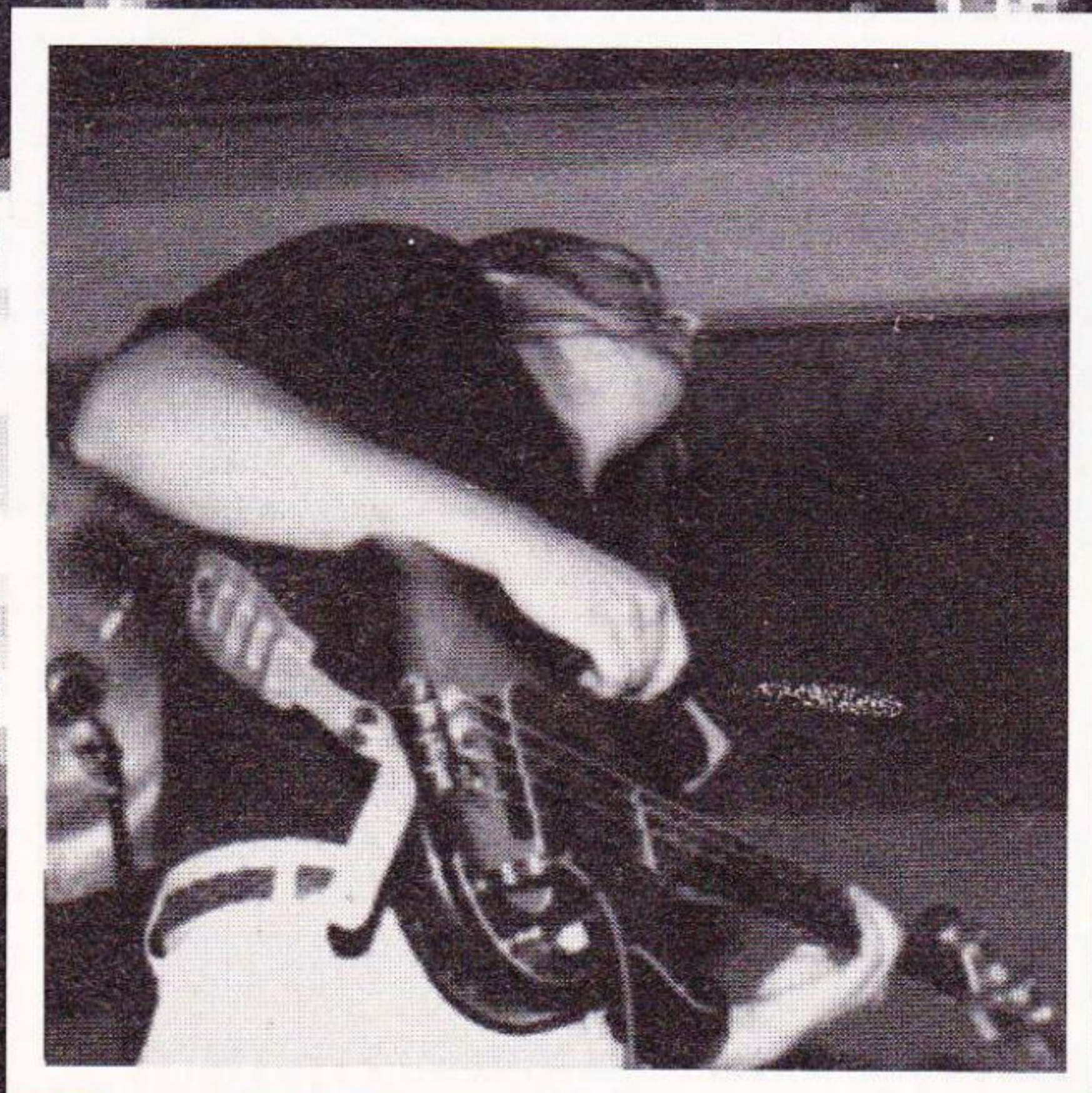
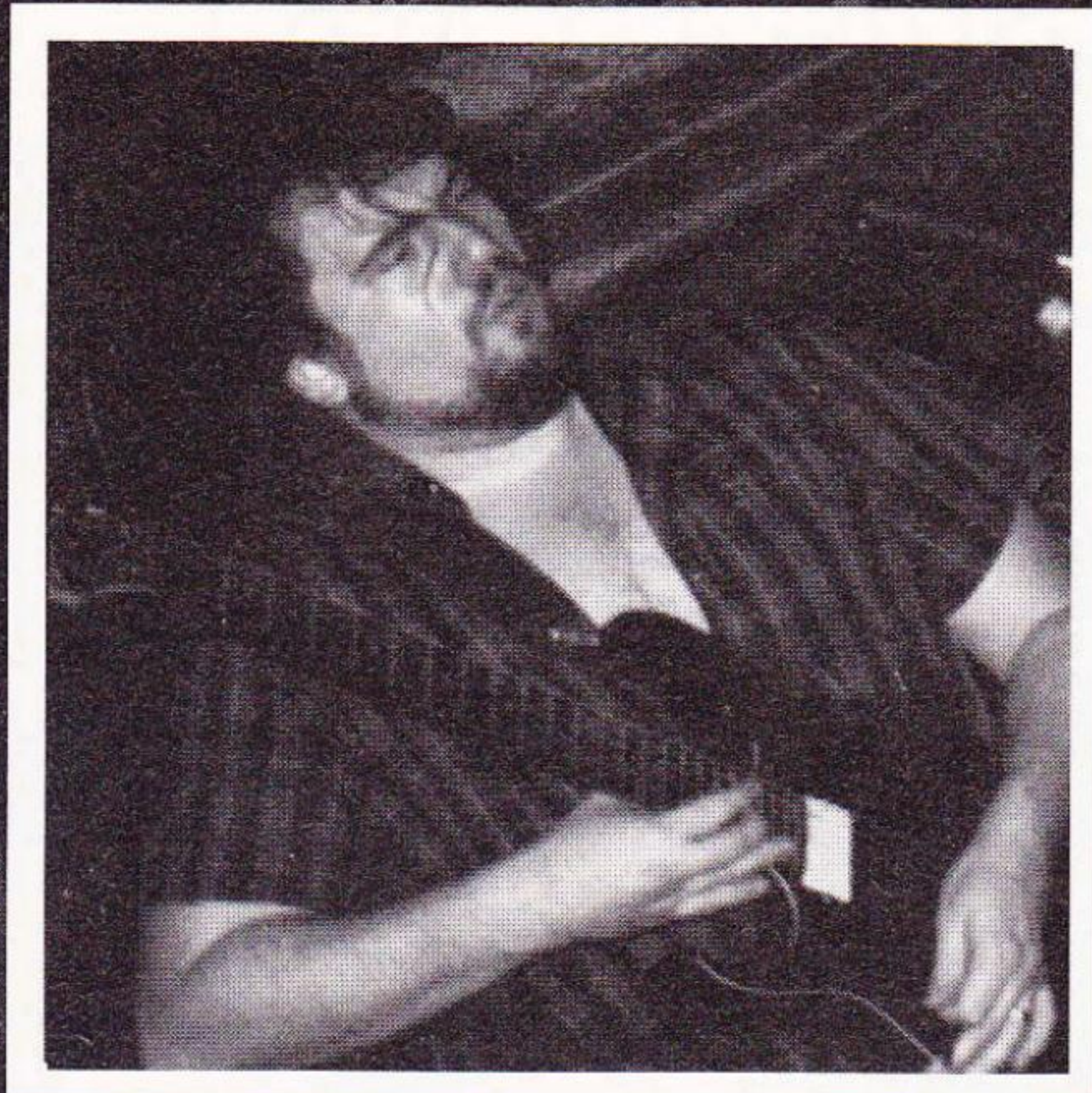
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don't have the immediate power and pull that my generation (and the few after it) were raised to expect. In simpler terms, it doesn't rock me. Bands like Guardian, Red Sea and Bride owe a lot to this kind of music, but I'll take these three any day over this mellow side.

--DV

MORTAL Rift (Video)

Intense

It's not what you'd expect -- a video about the band. It's an all-consuming look at child abuse and the song "Rift" powerfully works with it great. Eric Hannah and Christian Schneider of MTV's "Extreme Sports" put it together, of which they did a good job. The excess stuff here is a behind-the-scenes look at the making of the video, and then you get a close caption-like version of the video. During the behind-the-scenes footage there is dialogue that explains the motivations behind the video and each scene. Emotionally, it hits you like a ton of bricks. This video package takes two watches to even fathom. It stirs the soul...plus there is a great video to boot. This is an other reason why Mortal will be missed. (DV)

SCATERD FEW

Ahh, the Few is back. This release finds the band as tight as ever and taking a mature, more relaxed vocal approach. It's my favorite of all the Scaterd Few material.

One listen to "Dreams" and you'll see the diverse personality of the band. There's some killer atmospheric leads that get quirky during the solo, cool 'n' funky percussion, and esoteric BGV's on the chorus. The best cut is probably "Pinnacle," which jams out, breaks down, quotes Scripture, and does it all again, shifting moods like gears in a fine-tuned car.

The band, both musically and lyrically, want to stretch the imagination of its listeners. The storylines and inside emo-

tions are never quite crystallized into simple statements or blunt proclamations. For a trip into the weirdness, strap on a pair of headphones and dive into the lyric sheet here. The music almost becomes a psychedelic landscape of melody, progressive textures and slammin' grooves. The sonics are very good, never distracting from the sounds and allowing the songs to breathe.

The friends of addicted Jane and those who dig Jesus will enjoy this CD/Cassette release. For ordering info, write: Sopa Records, PO Box 10111, Burbank, CA 91510. (DV)

JEFF SCHEETZ (Video)

This footage is very cool and shows Jeff rippin' through some of his best songs with his band providing awesome backup. You get a great picture (the lighting isn't great, but adequate) with a great soundtrack. Some of the in-between cuts backstage, etc. are a bit cheese-ridden, but funny non-the-less.

Although not major network quality footage (shot with two cameras), it's right up close and uninterrupted (This means it's tons better than your home movies from Cornerstone!). It's about like what you'd see on a public access program.

The killer melodic piece "Lone Wolf" is here, sounding almost as good live as it did on *Woodpecker Stomp*. In addition to all the jammin' and personal in-betweens, there's some guitar schoolin' from Jeff. This is a good, full hour in front of the tv that's worth it! (DV)

TESTIFY

When I first heard that Eric Turner was the guitarist for Testify, I waited anxiously to hear how it'd sound -- for I've been a big Darrell Mansfield fan for over 10 years and Eric was Darrell's sidekick for many of those years. I'm sad to say I was disappointed when I finally heard his new band.

Testify does a decent job of cranking out the standard 80's commercial rock sound, but it has no bite to it. Vocalist Steven Urenda has personality and zip to his vocals, but the

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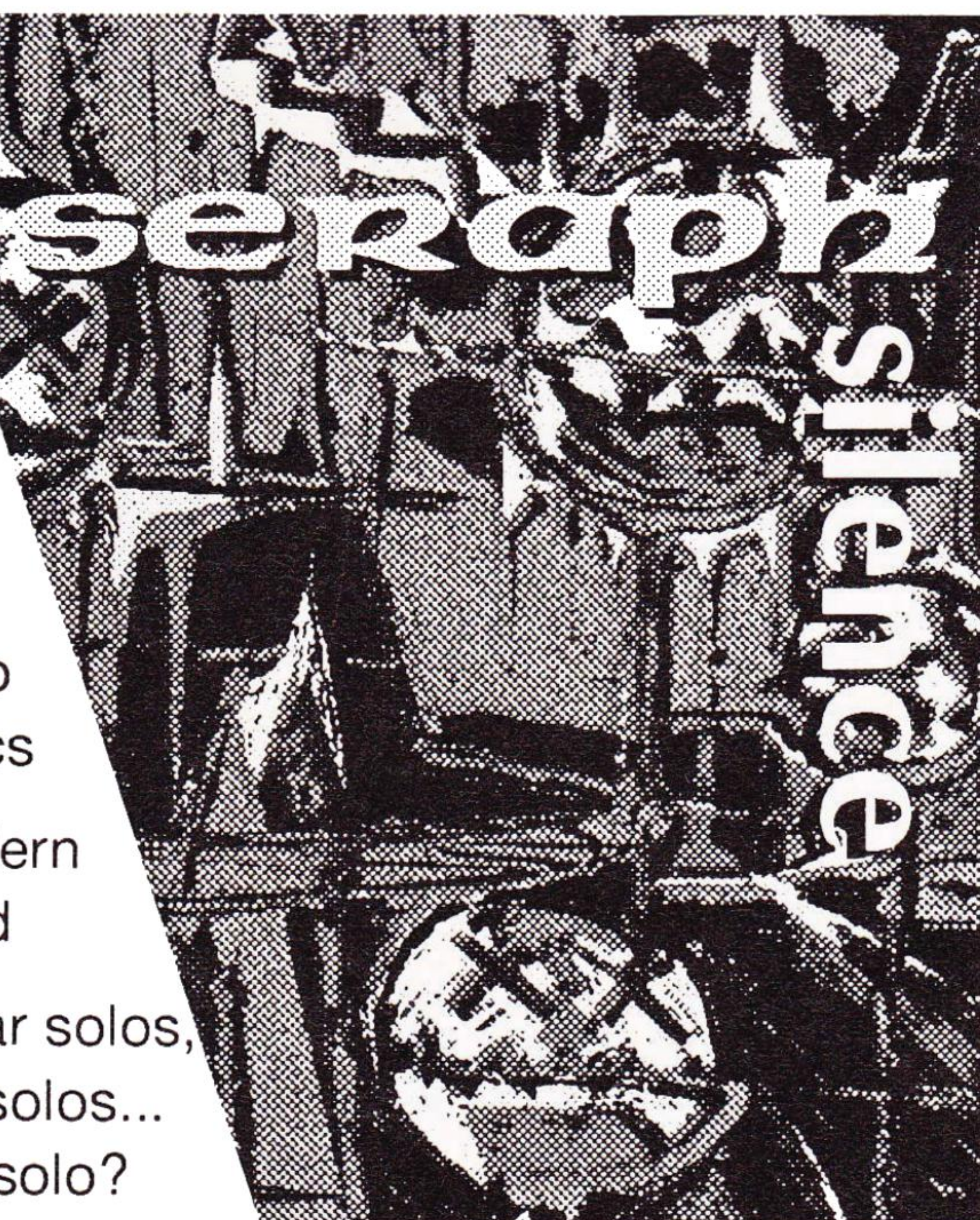
- The vocals
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Sometimes the pain of life hits you right in the skull and it makes you more angry and determined to overcome... The vocal delivery in this state of mind sounds something like Kermit from Nonpoint Factor, a Dave Mustaine desperation and angry voice.

This is high energy speed metal with some killer technical riffing at full velocity. This stuff demands to be heard. Good songwriting skills on top of their musical talents is what sets these guys apart from the pack. It's

great to hear music this cool coming up from the underground. The first three songs here, "Depression," "Common Weakness" and "You Hate Me" are CD-only bonus cuts from the upcoming album, *Anger Through An Art Form*, which this reviewer will now wait anxiously for. Bring 'em on boys...er, uh, men...I mean, dudes.

To order, send \$5 (Canada/Mexico - \$6/Overseas - \$7) to: A.R.T. Records, PO Box 770446, Coral Springs, FL 33077-0446.

--DV

songs don't flatter him well. You can hear good drum licks by Danny Peck and choice lead breaks by Eric, but the parts don't add up to an exciting sum. It's not bad music, but it sits between addictive pop hooks and blitzing hard rock.

Two songs that break out of this position are the moving ballad, "The Way," and "Walk With Me," which crafts a big hook with a good BGV line in the chorus, but the main vocal lines are weak.

To order, send \$10.95 (plus \$1.95 postage) to: Royalty Records, PO Box 4647, Anaheim, CA 92803-4647. (DV)

GLENN ROWLANDS

Wanna trip out? Listen to Glenn's 13-song tape of alternative rock tunes that ramble from driving tunes, like: "Help Me Understand," with great acoustic texturing; to the psychedelic grunge of "Everything is OK;" to the steel guitar accompaniment of "Holding On;" to the very Zeppelin-esque title track "Under The Desert Moon;" to the very cool Alice In Chains-ish "Somebody Done You Wrong;" to the Lennon-esque "Jesus Wept." You get it all here. While this description may sound like a confusing landscape, there is a consistent strong voice to point the way through all the tunes.

--DV

MIDNIGHT HOUR

This band bangs out a

pretty good dose of heavy rock and some pretty good songs. The vocals are produced in such a way that doesn't capitalize on the singer's voice, and therefore becomes a weakness. The piercing solos and crunchy rhythms try to save the songs, but weak vocals will keep widespread success away -- especially in the arena of commercial hard rock.

"Michael's Cry" is the standout cut, with a rapid lyric delivery and snare attack as the band kicks it into high gear. It must be named after Michael the archangel, because it describes quite a spiritual fight. It kicks!

Some of the tunes, like "Fighter," try to drag out old 80's metal riffs that don't quite knock out the listener. The ballad "Give Your Love to Me" asks, "Do you really wanna know what love is?" which sounds like a note-for-note cherry-pick of the Foreigner hit "I Want to Know What Love is."

There's some great ideas and good musicianship here, like the riffs in "Experience the Power," but they never quite jell together with the vocals to create something special. (DV)

FRANK'S ENEMY

Welcome to the "Julio room" (the name Julio Rey's old bandmates in The Lead gave to his guitar stage volume), where energy and noise rule the day. If fast 'n' frantic make your world spin, Frank's Enemy is your best friend.

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Be forewarned, though, these lyrics are as hard-hitting and hardcore as they come: "Like the death camp Jews who worked to finance their own deaths, money coming out of our pockets to misfeed heads." (from "Link Line"). In "Acts of Love," Julio talks about someone who contracted AIDS via homosexual relations: "Who was the human landmine that you shared passions with...so tempting to say it's all your fault, you asked for it all, hear judgment's call, til God pulls me from my sin and shows me all the hate I'm in." In "Man, You Made A Lonely World," Julio lambastes mankind's feeble attempts to better himself and the consequences we all face: "In the beginning there was Darwin and Marx, formulating theories to throw out God/artificial reality free of absolutes/The only sin left is telling the truth."

Musically, the band should feed the tastes of death metallers, due to 750 mph vocal growls and the extremely tight and aggressive runs that bassist

Marc Golob, drummer Alex A. and Julio fuse themselves together with.

Best riff is found in "Psychic Pain," a monster-long tune with an extended jam. An even longer and surprising jam is found at the tail end of "Reasons To Say No." Not an album for Guardian fans, but those into thrash 'n' grind will find a real gem here.

To order, send \$10 to: PO Box 523899, Miami, FL 33152-3899. (DV)

GRAMMATRAIN

Here's a trio of Seattle residents performing (guess what style of) music that's very derivative of 70's hard rock: It's very vocal heavy, with a fairly jangly drum beat. Fans of punk, jazz and (especially) grunge all have something to appreciate.

While not the absolute best production, it still stands head and shoulders above many custom projects (ie. it's professional). The tightness and casual looseness of the tempo hint that this band is probably killer in

concert.

Lyricaly, the band uses strong imagery to drive home some relevant points with conviction. "Drown" covers alcoholism, "Mindform" lays waste to MTV, and "Need" is a humble admission of dependency on God.

These guys are good enough to make a big racket. For more info, write: 4120 California Ave SW, Seattle, WA 98116.

--DV

URGENT CRY/SERAPH

Here's something we'll probably see a lot more of in the future -- a split CD, where two bands go in on the cost to pay for one CD to be pressed. It's cheaper and accomplishes about the same impact. A lot of punk bands used to do split 7" singles back in the 80's.

Seraph starts it off with some edgy material that fuses the danceable side of techno with straight-ahead guitar rock. The outcome is pretty palatable, yet some of the non-processed vocals (the processed ones fit better!) are somehow off. The guitar

riffs and tones are definitely here, both lead and bass. "Wild Honey" takes a bold and progressive jazz and funk tempo approach that is fresh 'n' groovy. Seraph's creativity will carry them further in the future.

Urgent Cry takes a more melodic approach than their diskmates, albeit relying on the same hard rock base. "Foolish" and "Love to the Third Power" are rockers and "I Disappear" and "Light of the World" are power ballads. Lead vocalist Jamie Baker sounds best and most relaxed in "I Disappear," which is the best moment on the CD.

--DV

STRONGARM

This band has a lot of good things going for it, including its sound. The music is direct, abrasive and aggressive. While not having the thickest drum sound in the world, this tape has decent sonics that allow you to feel the power rather than imagine it. Write: 2743 NE 18th Street, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33305.

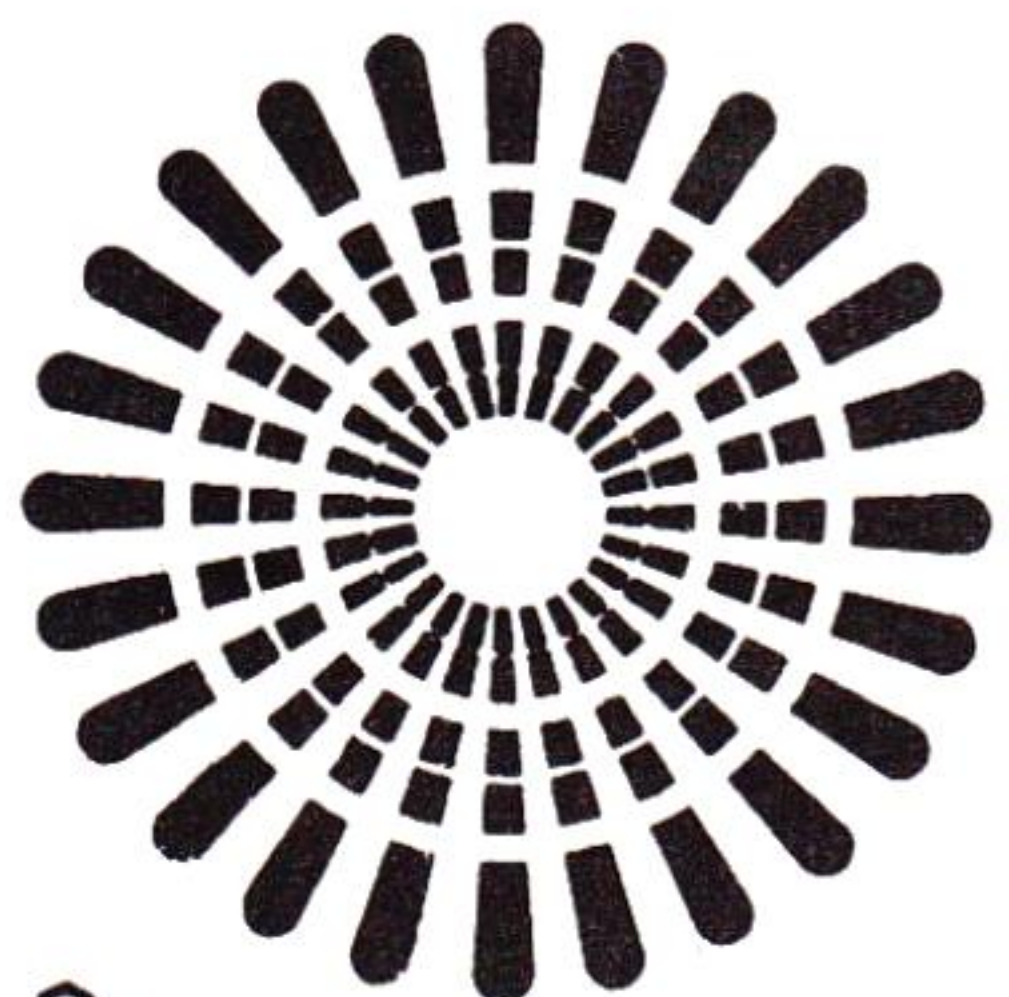
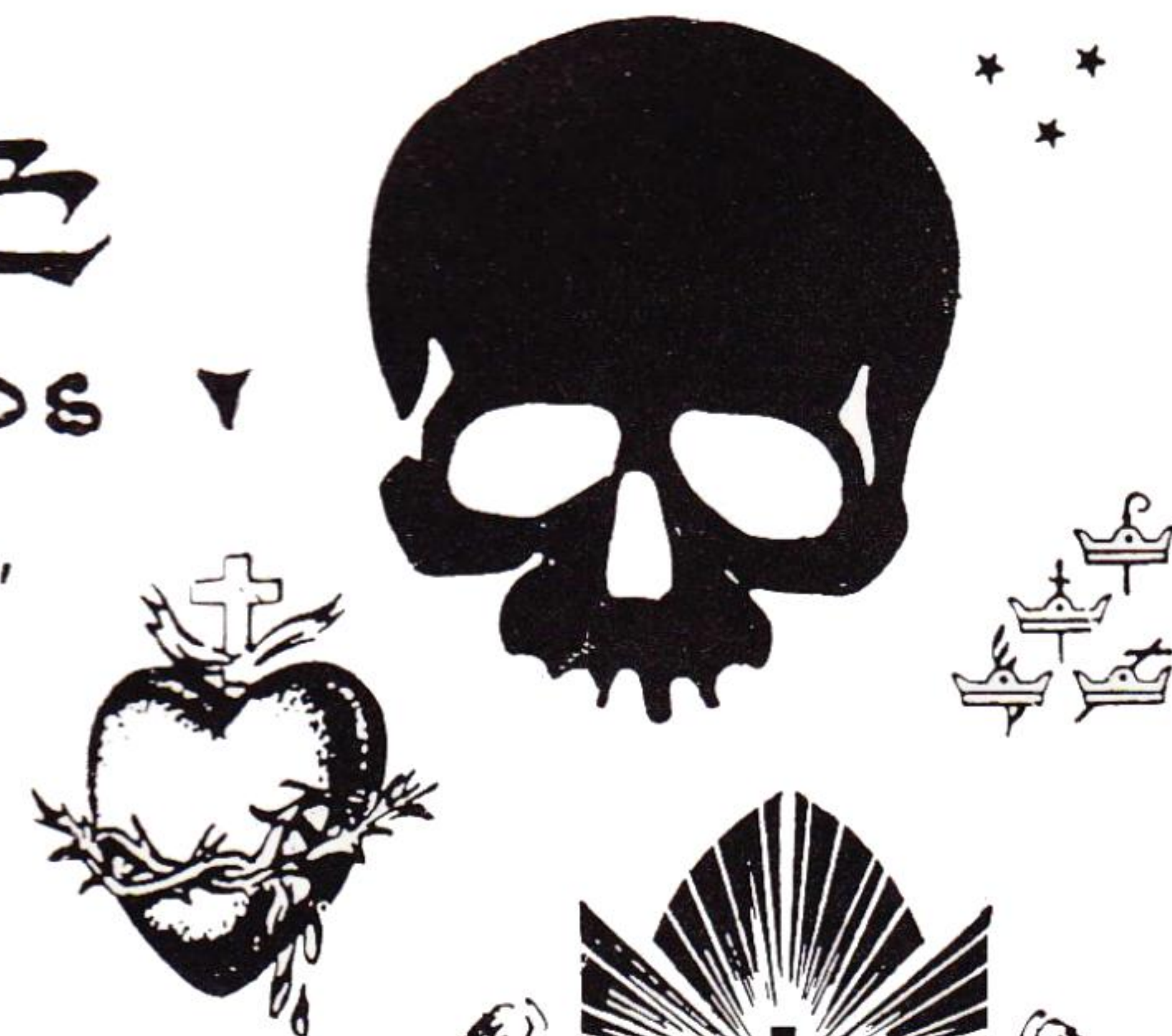
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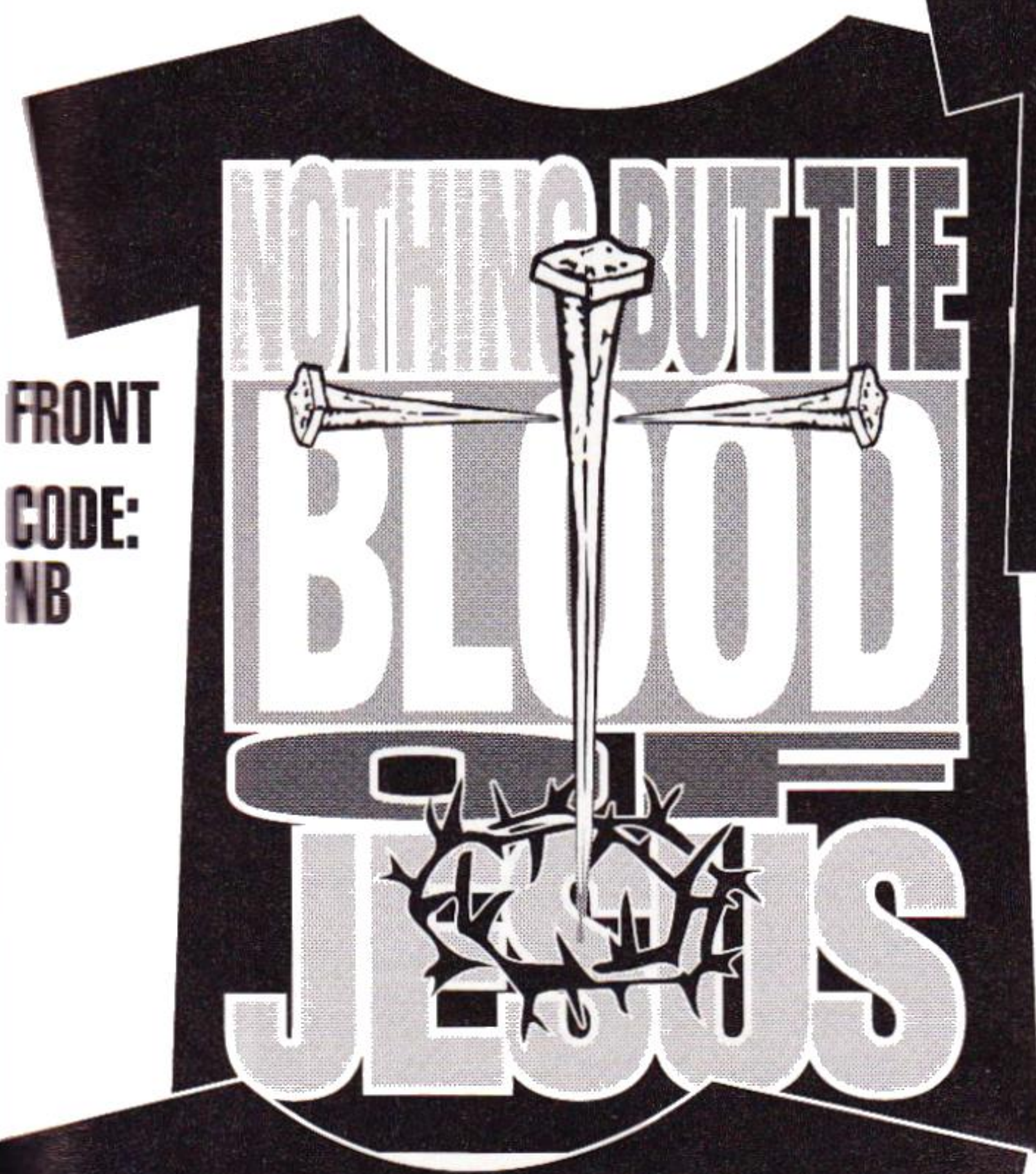
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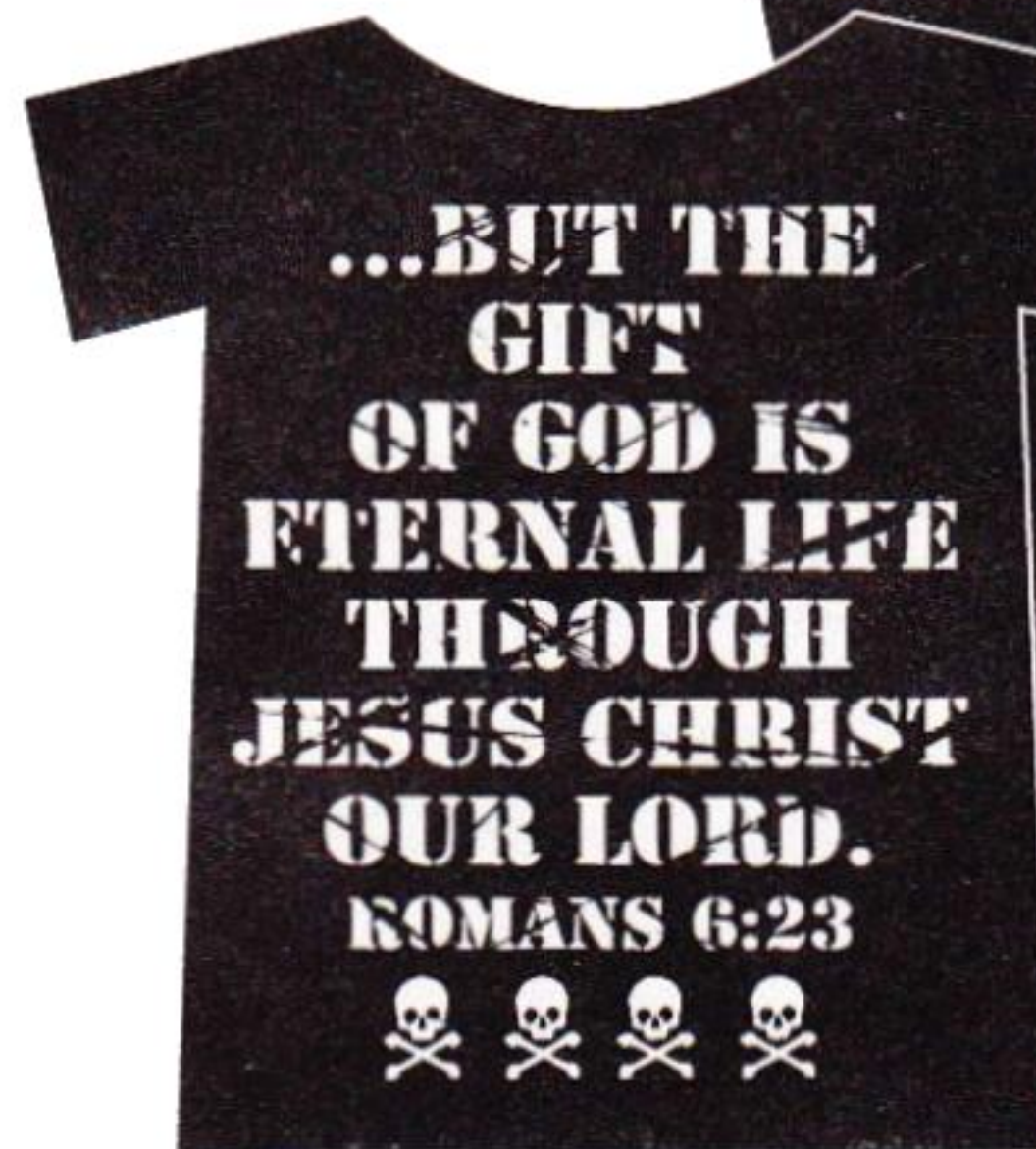
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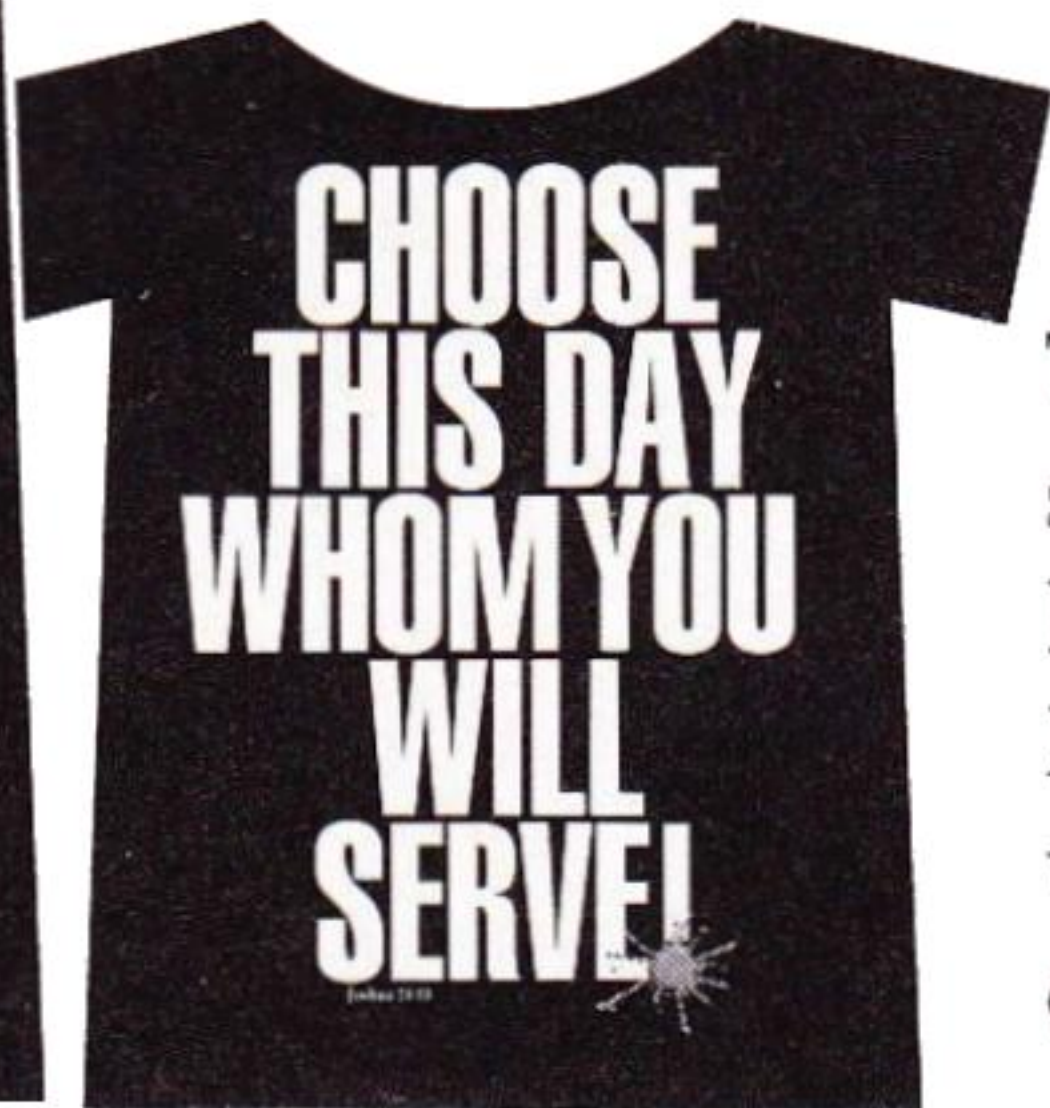


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our salvation to give
us eternal life!

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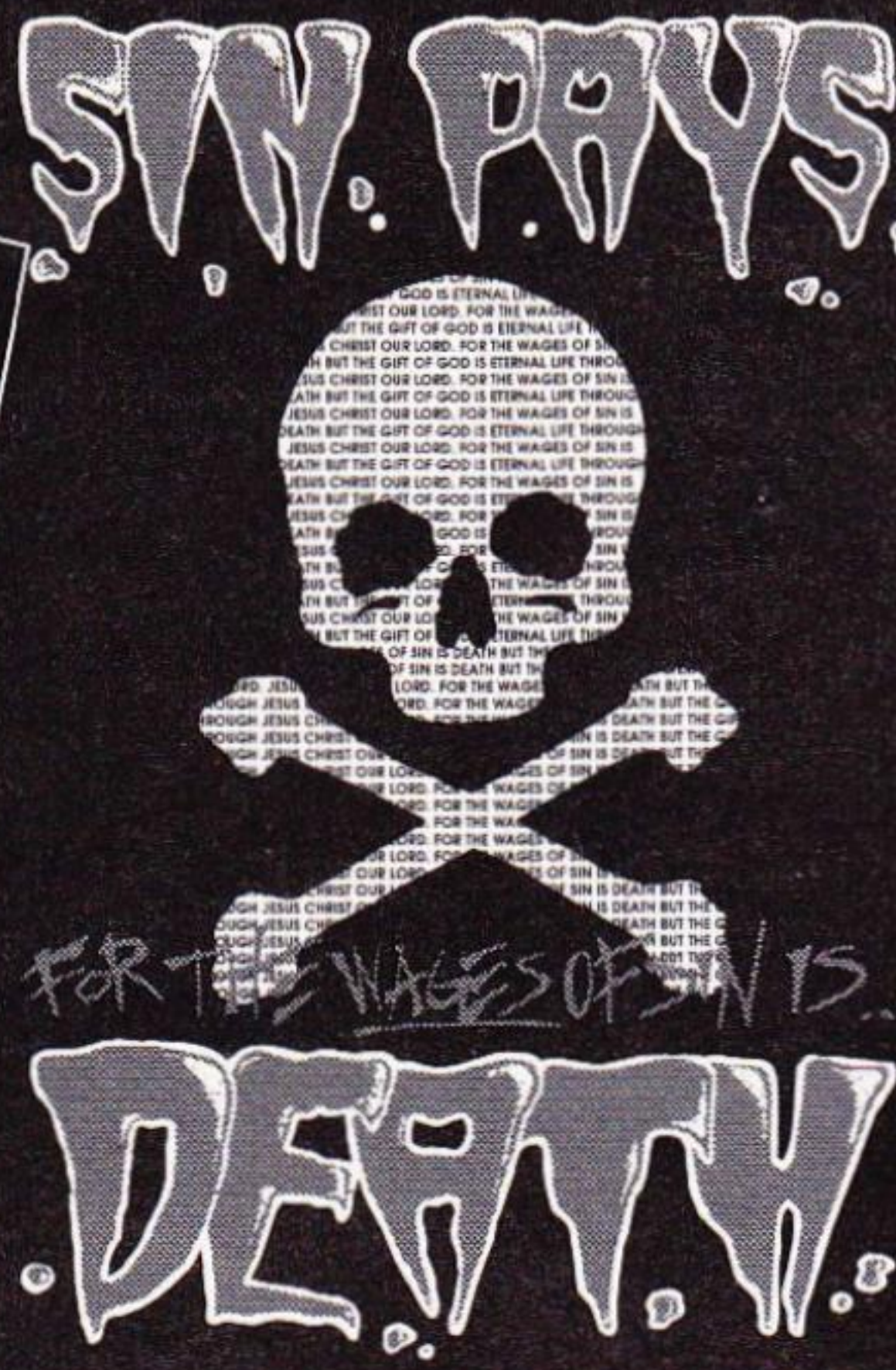
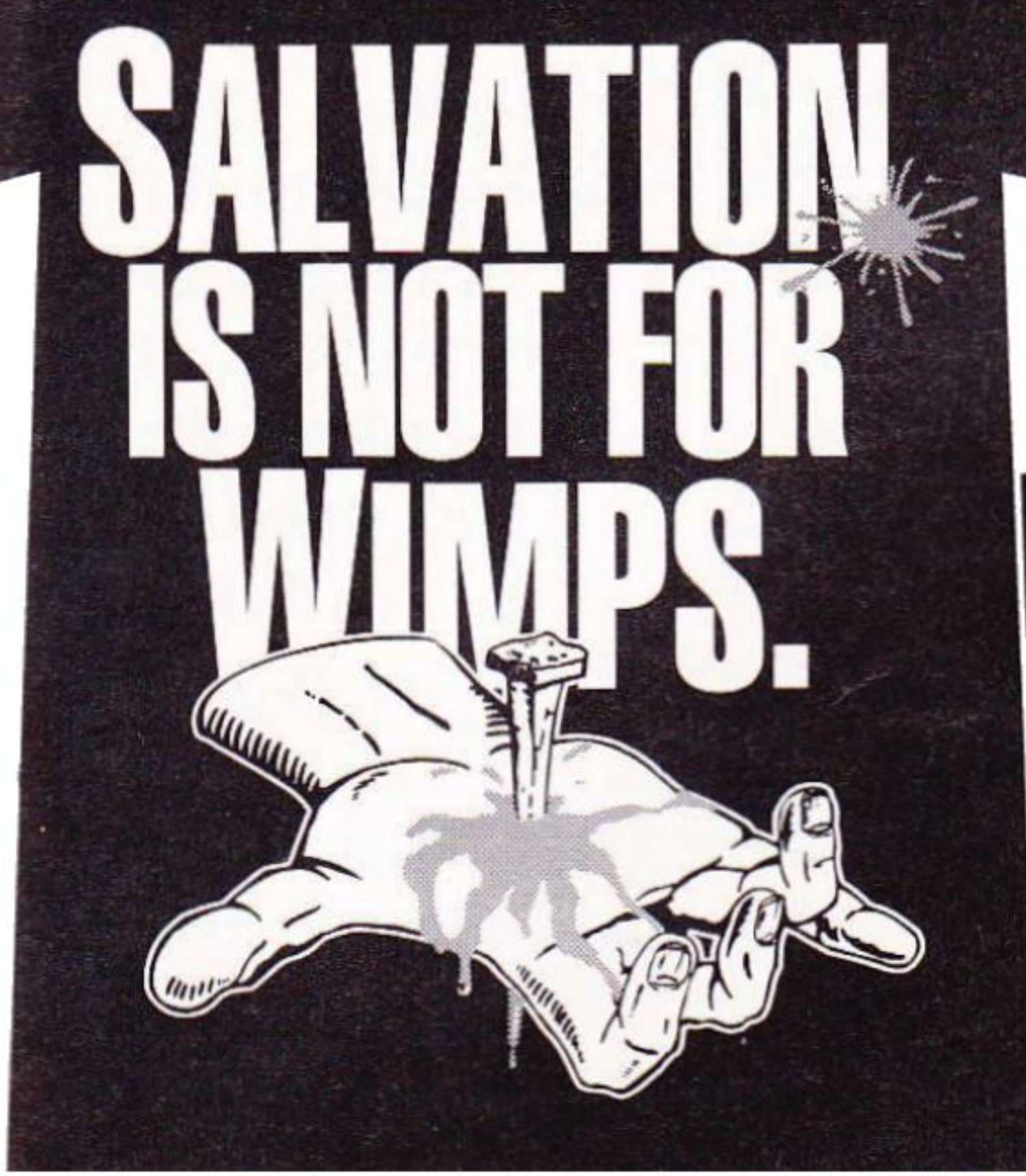


BACK



BACK

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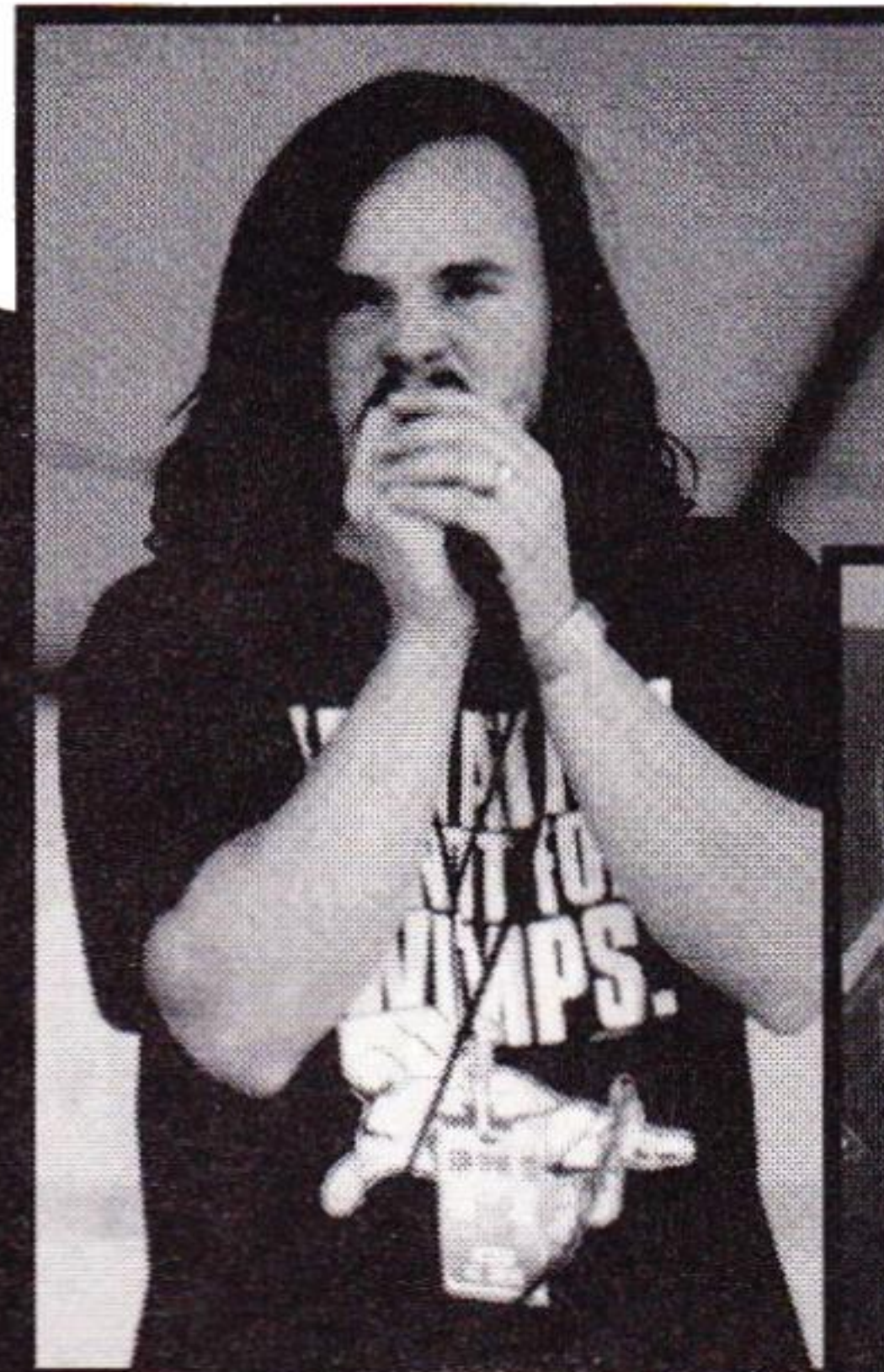


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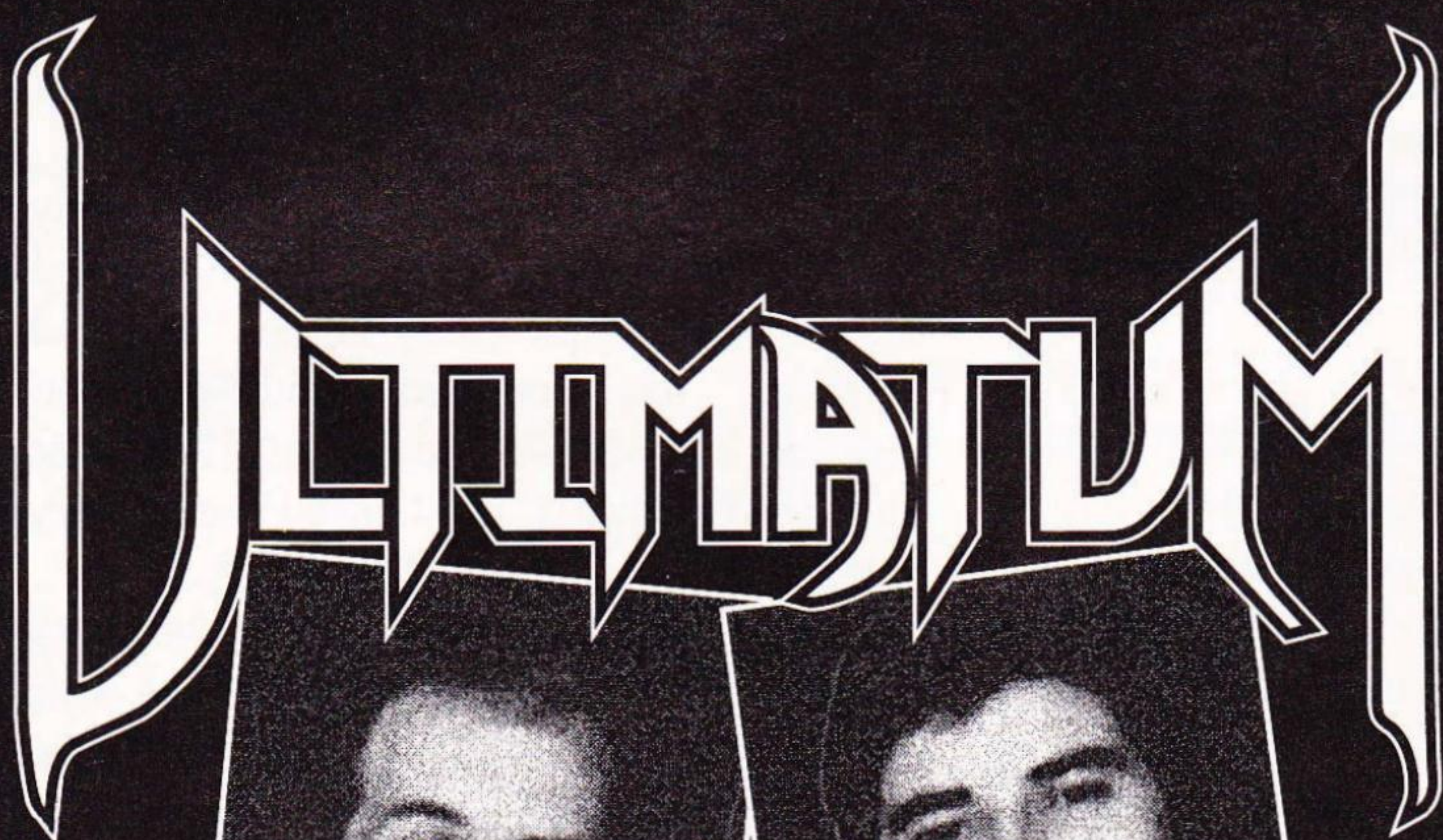
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Ultimatum vocalist Scott Waters wearing our "Wimps" shirt and guitarist Bobby Gutierrez wearing our hooded "Nothing But the Blood" shirt.



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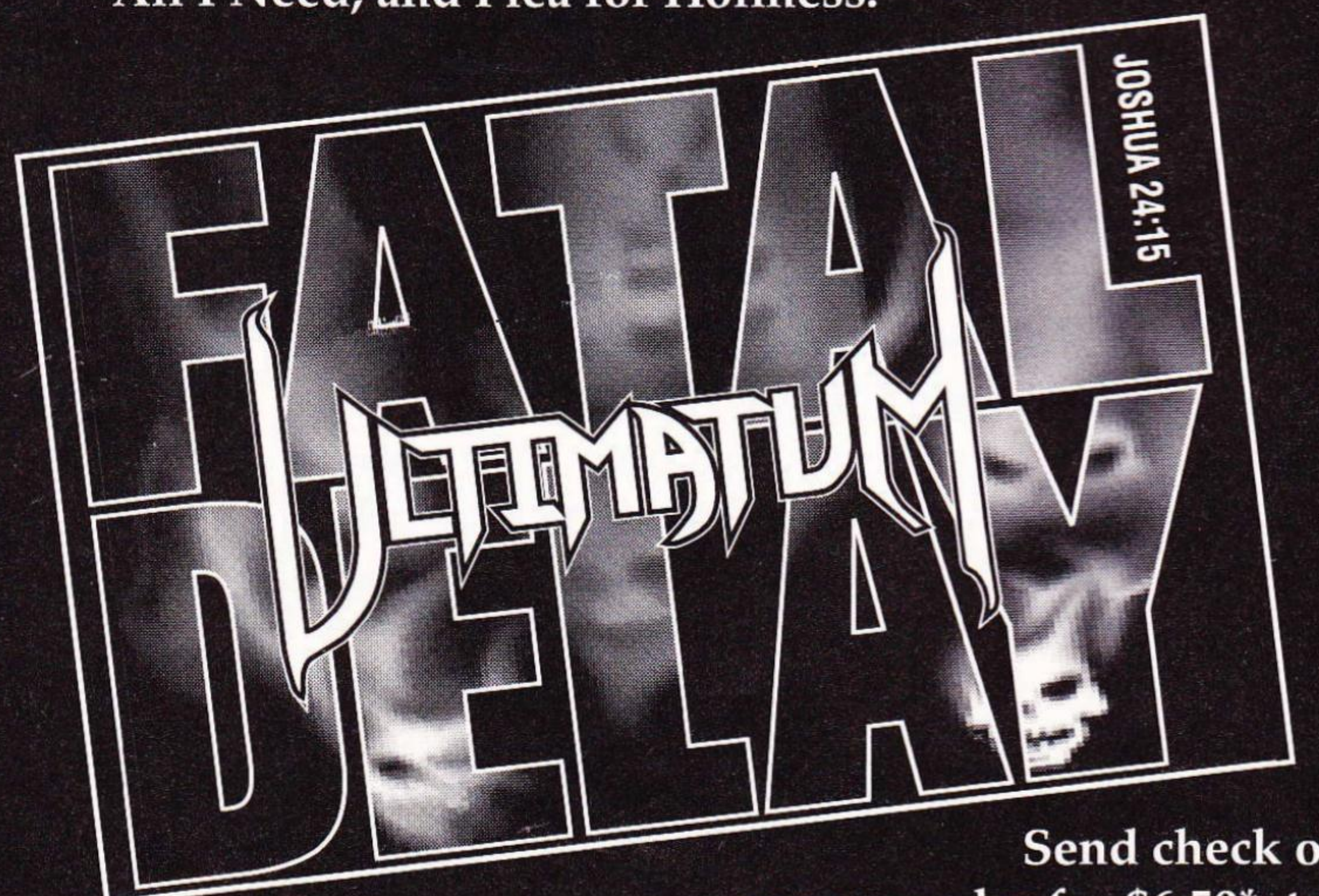
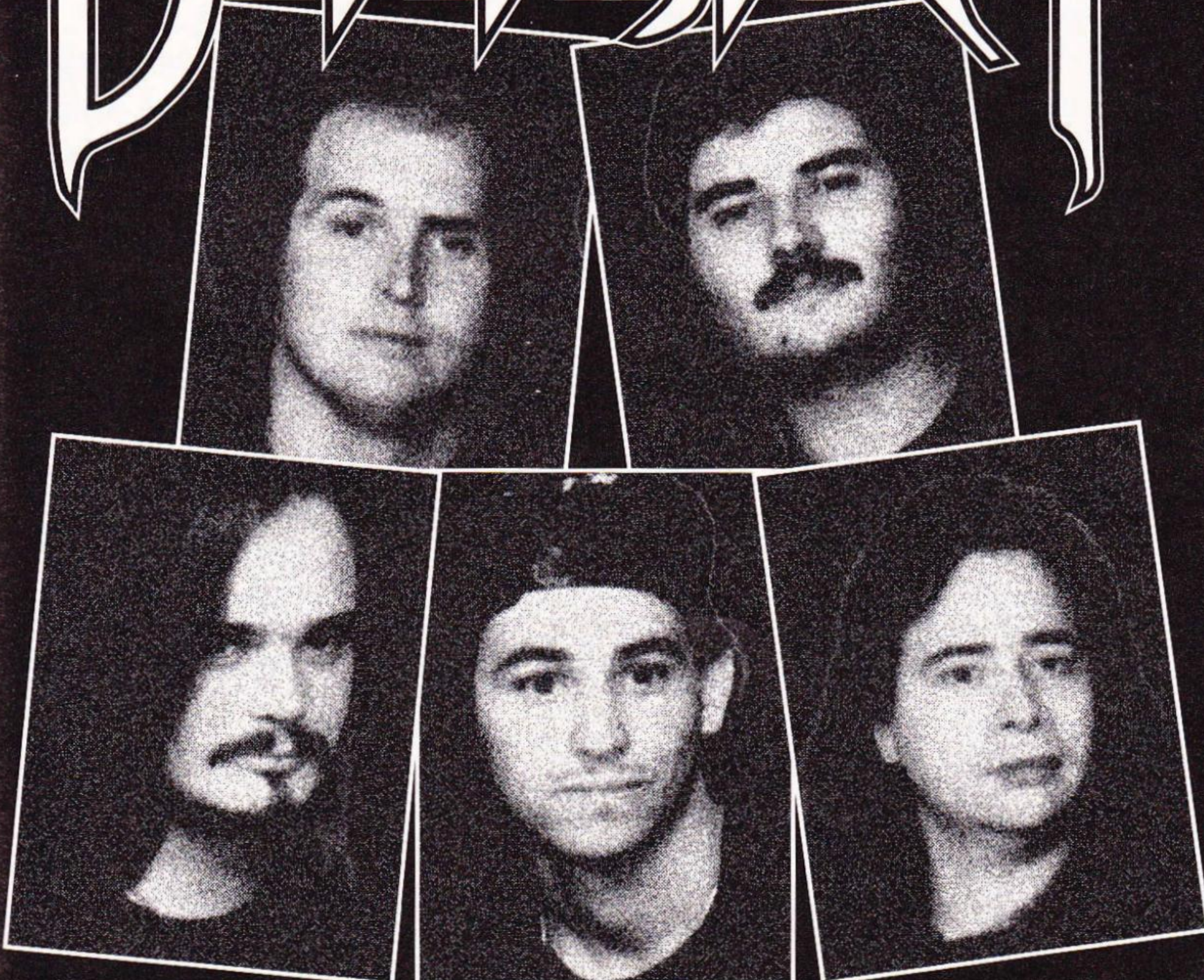


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Atomic Opera Cont'd:

you're true, if you really listen to your desires, your longings, I think that in the long run they will lead you to the right place. Are you familiar with the book, The Pilgrim's Regress by C.S. Lewis?

"It's a real cool book. It talks about the whole idea of longings and letting your longings sort of lead you on your spiritual path, because we all truly long for what is meant to be in our lives, and people try to fill that longing with a lot of different things, only to find out that those things do not fill it. The only real problem is when you fill that longing with something that doesn't truly satisfy it, and you give up and you just stay there. I guess I took a long time to say that: To not be satisfied with something that fills that hole, and when you're not satisfied with it, don't just stay there because other people have stayed there. That's where I was for a long time. I was in churches that were bankrupt spiritually, but I was there and I was accepting that to be all there was in truth and light and enlightenment of God and His people. It was a place of despair."

DO YOU FIND YOUR-SELF NOW WHERE YOU FIND YOURSELF NOT IN A PLACE OF DESPAIR?

"Yeah. I've been going here for two years. I will never in my life...I have no hope of ever finding a place or a group of people that I agree with on every little single aspect of theology and social consciousness and political...that's not going to happen. I'm not looking for that, but I did find a group of people that I can hang out with and that I can enjoy being around them and I can draw strength from them, and hopefully it's a relationship where they can draw strength from my wife and I. I like going there. I wouldn't trade it for anything, but that's not to say that every little thing they believe I believe."

IT'S LIKE THE OLD SAYING, "IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT CHURCH, DON'T GO THERE, BECAUSE YOU'LL RUIN IT."

I REGRET WE TALKED SO MUCH ABOUT THIS, BUT MAYBE IT WILL HELP.

"Yeah, I was kinda scared about doing this. Atomic Opera is not a Gospel band. That's not what we're about. We write songs about things that happen in our life. We're not trying to convince anyone of anything. That's why I was kind of scared, but I just felt like I was just sitting here talking to ya."

HM

GLENN KAISER (Book) The Responsibility of the Christian Musician

This is the kind of book you should hold up as a yardstick standard and say, "This is good!" Primary reason is that it cuts to the core of some of the pain-causing pitfalls many a musician faces, yet without measuring you with a judgmental spirit. Behind the book is an author who knows what he's talking about, too.

I'd recommend this book for every pastor (youth pastor, too) out there, as well as every musician. The non-musician fan will get a lot of insight out of it too. Thumbs up.

For ordering info, write: Cornerstone Press, 939 W. Wilson Ave, Chicago IL 60640.

--DV

STYMIE

With this Little Rascal's style packaging, it made me want to rip this tape open and hear it immediately (10 points for packaging).

The music inside is eclectic, funky and tastefully played (10 points for creativity). Like the early music of Hot Pink Turtle, the band shows its jazz and funk influences so much that they sail over the heads of the average listener. Maybe a simpler blend of these influences with straight-ahead rock a la Aerosmith would grab a bigger audience (4 points for accessibility).

If these guys keep developing, they should build a loyal fan base. For ordering info, write: 438 Rospaw, Placentia, CA 92670.

--DV

MATRIX

Those wanting a glimpse at the not-so-pretty early days of Bride can do so at their own risk with this Matrix CD release. Culling songs from PG-13 and Monkey See Monkey Do, these 20 songs take many of us back to the old days when Dale and Troy would advertise and circulate their custom tapes in the underground. These were the days when songs like "Stand Up And Shout" were, like, "Wow, heavy metal man!"

As I'm sure the Thompson Bros. would agree, the majority of this stuff is laughable now...even the tunes that were re-recorded for Bride's first couple of records - "All Hallow's Eve," "Forever in Darkness" and "Heroes." But, for those wishing to relive those early years of Christian metal, you get the Matrix version here.

For ordering info, write: Dale & Troy Thompson, 295 Churchview Rd, West Point KY 40177.

--DV

POSSESSION

These guys shred! This 3-song EP, called The Unnameable Suffering, is on compact disc, but the sound fluctuates like it was a tape losing particles. The vocals of Nyk E. go off the Richter scale a few times -- to the detriment of the song, but most of the time they're fine growls. The musicians are smokin' hot, though, through and through. There's tight guitar playing with skilled leads and a locked-in rhythm section. The graphics and lyrics are done in such a way to tell the truth, but attract the deceived flock to it.

To order, send \$4 to: PO Box 3031, Olathe, KS 66063-1031.

--DV

Crankin' At The New Union

The weekend before C-Stone, my wife and I had the privilege of helping judge the 1994 New Union Band Tournament. It was a great weekend, especially because the two top finalists, Anna's Eye Tooth and Here Lies Franklin totally shredded! You'll hear more about both of them in the future...I'm sure!

Here's a 15-song live sample of 15 of the finalists. The tape sequence was picked to list the bands alphabetically, and the live recording captured in the first two songs sound a bit flat and two-dimensional, which takes away from the talent represented here. Therefore, the first impression is that this tape is more of a keepsake for those present who want a record of what they heard; rather than an introduction that shows 15 hot new bands.

The best sonic moments probably come in the non-edgy tunes by Epa Aldea and Glass Houses. Epa Aldea's tune, "Joy And Tremble," has good sonics and separation between the low end and highs. The guitar lines are very cool. The Glass Houses tune, "Welcome," is very atmospheric.

"Mission," by contest winners Here Lies Franklin, starts with an intro with the power and room-filling vocal sounds of a Jerusalem and goes into "Mission," an okay tune showing the band's chops. A couple other standouts are: Mr. Crazy, an outlandish, noisy band that takes a hardcore approach to melodic hard rock; and Cybernetix, a cool, aggressive band with a great guitar tone.

This album is a great idea with a decent outcome. To order, send \$6 (tape/\$8 CD -- plus \$1 postage) to: The New Union, 507 E. Hennepin Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55414.

--DV

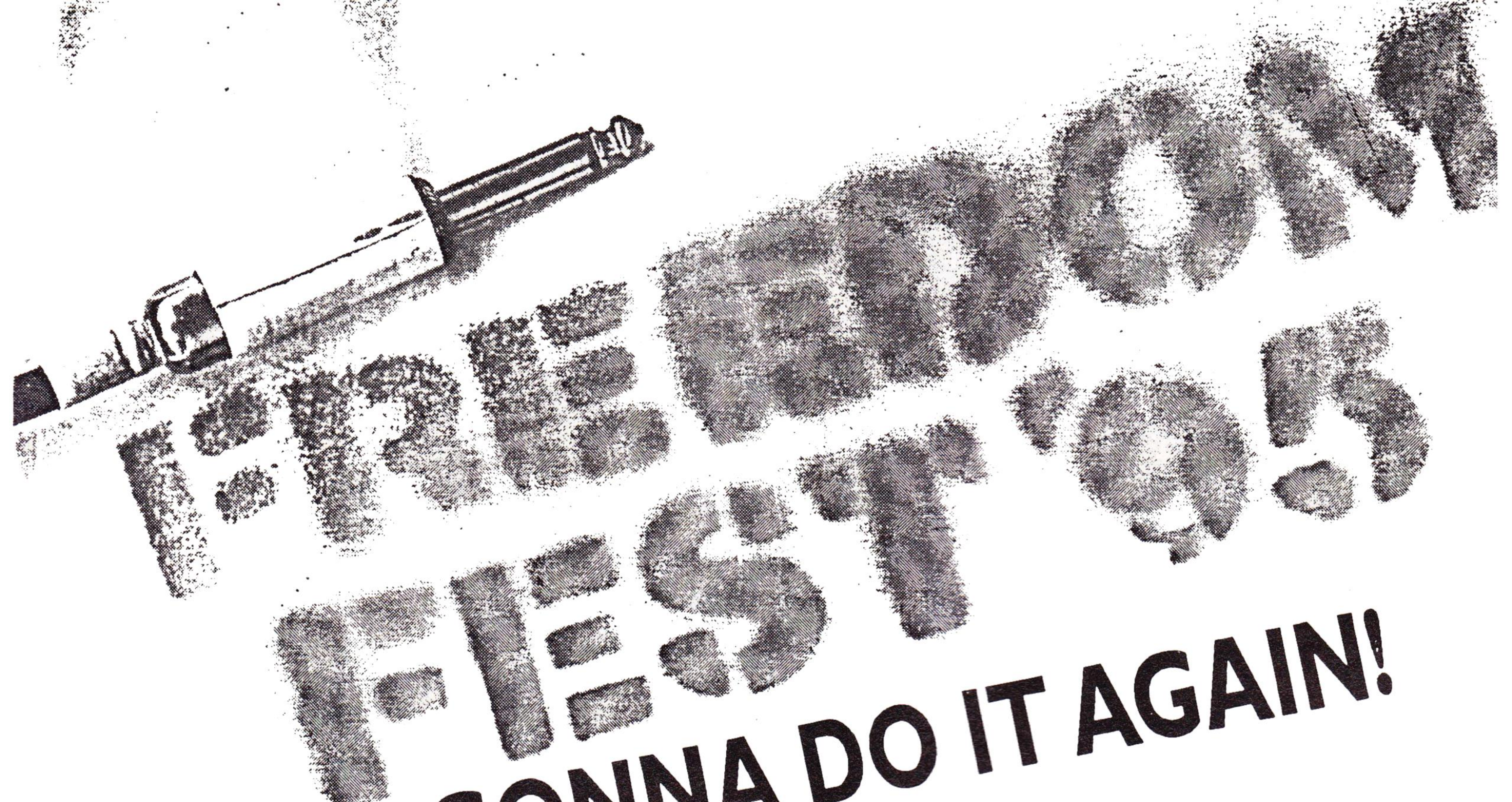
Continued on page 79

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MORE ALBUM REVIEWS

THE 7" SCENE

Okay, here's a brief rundown on several 7" maxi-singles for all you buffs who still have a turntable. **Crux** and **Black Cherry Soda** did a split single, with each band cutting two songs. **Crux** takes the old school punk approach to their raw tunes; and **BCS** takes a slightly slower approach that relies on a similar raw angle. To order, send \$4 (made out to Greg Dimick) to: Boot to Head Records, 3335 SE Harvey #F, Milwaukee, OR 97222.

Dry Bones, who have since evolved into **Crawspace** (change your name back!), do three songs on a limited edition 7" (as are all the A.R.T. 7-inchers) that all crunch bones big time. Good guitar sound (as usual) guys! They tackle racism and legalism with forceful words.

Godhead tunes way down for a heavy couple of songs, "Malevolent Apostasy" and "Unspoken Madness." "Unspoken..." is really cool, mixing blast beats under a groove with deathly vocals and some terror screams and wailing guitars to top it all off.

Drop Dead drops a couple songs from its 1990 release, *Our Forgotten Destiny*: "March of Empire" and "Clouds on the Horizon." These dudes get ferociously heavy and they have the chops to drop a classical guitar bridge for kicks. One listen to these songs and you'll hear why they had such a great reputation in the underground.

Final Judgement took two tracks from its *Drastic Dose of Reality* EP, both of which thrash away with a vengeance, especially in the lengthy "Punishable By Death."

For ordering info on the last four 7-inchers, write: A.R.T. Records, PO Box 770446, Coral Springs, FL 33077-0446.

--DV

HM

RockMusicReport

LOUD
CHART

July 20

TM TITLE Artist (Label)

- 1 **SOUTHPAW**
Precious Death (Metro One)
- 2 **HERE I AM**
Barren Cross (Rugged)
- 3 **SOULSHAKER**
Red Sea (Rugged)
- 4 **EARTHMAKER**
The Clergy (Broken)
- 5 **DARKENED** HIGHEST DEBUT
Living Sacrifice (R.E.X.)
- 6 **MYSTERY OF LOVE**
Neon Cross (Rugged)
- 7 **DIMENTIA**
Believer (R.E.X.)
- 8 **BEAST**
Bride (StarSong)
- 9 **ABSENCE**
Focused (Tooth & Nail)
- 10 **I AM THE CHIEF**
One Bad Pig (Diadem)
- 11 **NOTHING BUT THE BLOOD**
P.K. Mitchell (Rugged)
- 12 **LIFT**
Mortal (Intense)
- 13 **OCEAN**
Wish For Eden (Tooth & Nail)
- 14 **FLY**
Wish For Eden (Tooth & Nail)
- 15 **FATHER TO SON**
Detritus (R.E.X.)
- 16 **CRAWL**
Sometimes Sunday (Tooth & Nail)
- 17 **PAINTED REALITY**
Detritus (R.E.X.)
- 18 **VOICE OF DEFIANCE**
Crashdog (R.E.X.)
- 19 **AM I IN SYNC**
Circle of Dust (R.E.X.)
- 20 **CRANIAL TYRANT**
Brainchild (R.E.X.)

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Ask Wendi...



I have received many letters over the last two months that I have wanted to answer, but with the annual return to school, the editor has asked me to suspend my regular column and address the issue of peer pressure among teens. Many of you are in that awkward but exciting life stage of no longer being children but not quite being adults.

You are teenagers faced with living in the temporary world of junior high and high school. Unfortunately, many -- and I dare say most -- of you are also alienated from your strongest potential earthly sources of stability and have replaced their voices for moderation with the immediate demands of the "group." (You should ask yourself who are your personal voices for moderation and stability)

Everyday decisions can seem so intensely urgent that taking time for careful reflection is unthinkable. You live in the NOW -- capital letters. Emotions frequently take precedence over reality. Every day is either HORRIBLE or WONDERFUL. This also can change from hour to hour. Your entire life is "ruined" weekly by teachers, parents, and other hopelessly antiquated adults. Church is boring and life is moving too fast to pray, except in emergencies. Your spiritual lifeline may consist of the latest CD or tape. Friends seem more relevant than

Bible studies. You fall in and out of "love" monthly and are faced with sexual issues every week.

It seems as if you were tossed unprepared and unsuspectingly into the high seas of troubling hormones and fluctuating emotions. How did life ever become so confusing? Having personally survived the white waters of teenagerdom, I feel qualified to advise other teens on the perils of peer pressure.

Several timeless myths have been believed and purported by you and your friends. A common one I hear weekly is the "there is no time to talk about it; everyone is doing it; if I don't get to do it, life will cease to exist or have meaning" ploy. This is a major misbelief and can cause you to make unwise decisions while creating havoc at home. Honestly, rarely is "everyone" doing a particular something or going to a particular somewhere. There are very few decisions that demand an instant answer. I can only come up with a few unusual examples such as the "to save a life from a moving vehicle" variety.

The decisions we make every day should be made after taking what I call the traffic light test: Is it right, pure, and good? If yes, then you have a green light to proceed. Is it wrong, selfish, or potentially harmful? If yes, then see red and stop! Is it questionable, uncertain, and/or pressured? If yes, then you have a yellow light; wait, ask for guidance, and then proceed with caution. You will not physically die if you wait even two days for an answer. Also, some things will never be right, no matter what your age or circumstances, and it is simply foolish to even consider them as viable options.

The other biggie I hear is, "It's not fair; life must be fair." Hmm? Did the tooth fairy come and whisper this bit of fantasy into your young ears? Do yourself a favor and tell yourself the truth. LIFE is NOT FAIR. You cannot always have things your way. You should know that life is not under your ultimate control no matter how loud you scream or how many doors you slam. But, on the other hand, God can and does work all things out for your good IF you love and obey Him. (Romans 8:28) Again, you must sometimes

ride out the disappointments and personal injustices to experience God's best.

"He (or she) is the only one for me" is said by countless teenagers. It is highly unlikely that you will find your true love at fifteen or even sixteen years of age. In fact, the idea that you must have a boyfriend or girlfriend to feel good about yourself is a real dead end. You will leave yourself open to manipulation by others or to manipulating others for acceptance. God is the only friend who will never leave you or let you down (Psalm 27:10, Matthew 28:20, Isaiah 54:10, Hebrews 13:5). Only His love is unconditional and eternal. Why not avoid the heartaches and sexual temptations of "going steady" and just have friends and enjoy group activities?

Another teen trap is trying to measure up. The problem is that you will always find someone to put down or someone who puts you down. Self-worth cannot be honestly found by measuring yourself against others. We are all sinners and none of us can measure up to God. He's the great equalizer. Read a little of James chapter two to get a perspective on favoritism based on appearances and achievements.

You are unique and so special in God's eyes that He personally sent His Son to take the rap for your mess-ups, and, if you trust Him, He will give you His ultimate cosmic stamp of approval. As it says in Romans 8:31, "If God is for us, who can be against us?"

So, in closing, I recommend keeping a good sense of humor and a decent perspective during your teen-madness years. Your standards should be based on the unchanging and always-in-good-taste Word of God, not on the passing trends and philosophies of your friends. "Be happy, young (person) while you are young, and let your heart give you joy in the days of your youth. Follow the ways of your heart and whatever your eyes see, but know that for all these things God will bring you to judgment." (Ecclesiastes 11:9)

You can write me at: Wendi Kaiser, 920 W. Wilson Ave, Dept. W, Chicago IL 60640. HM

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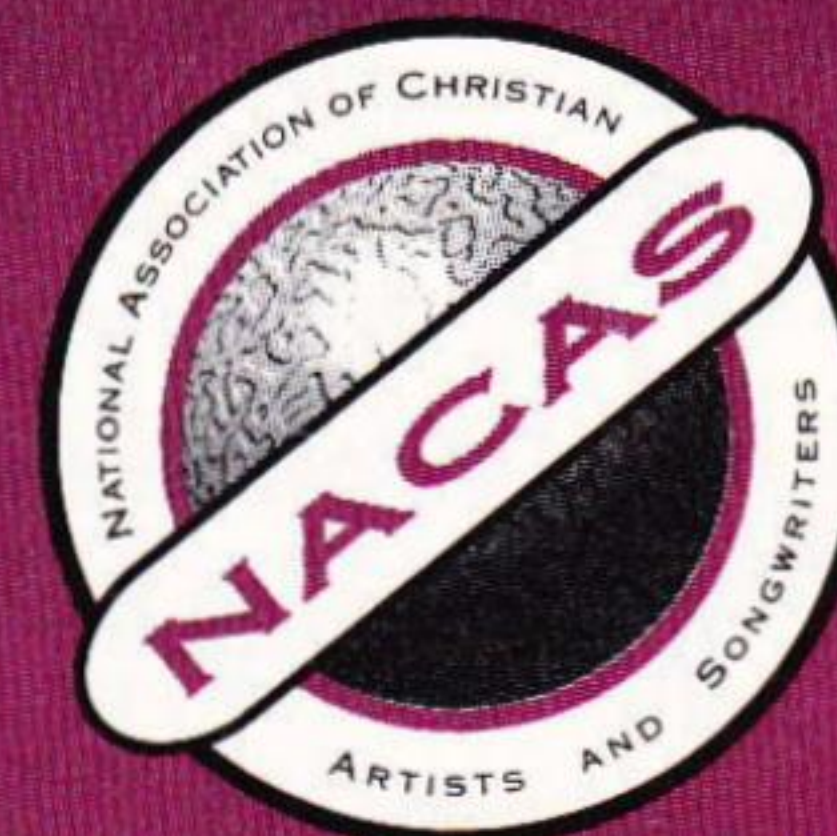
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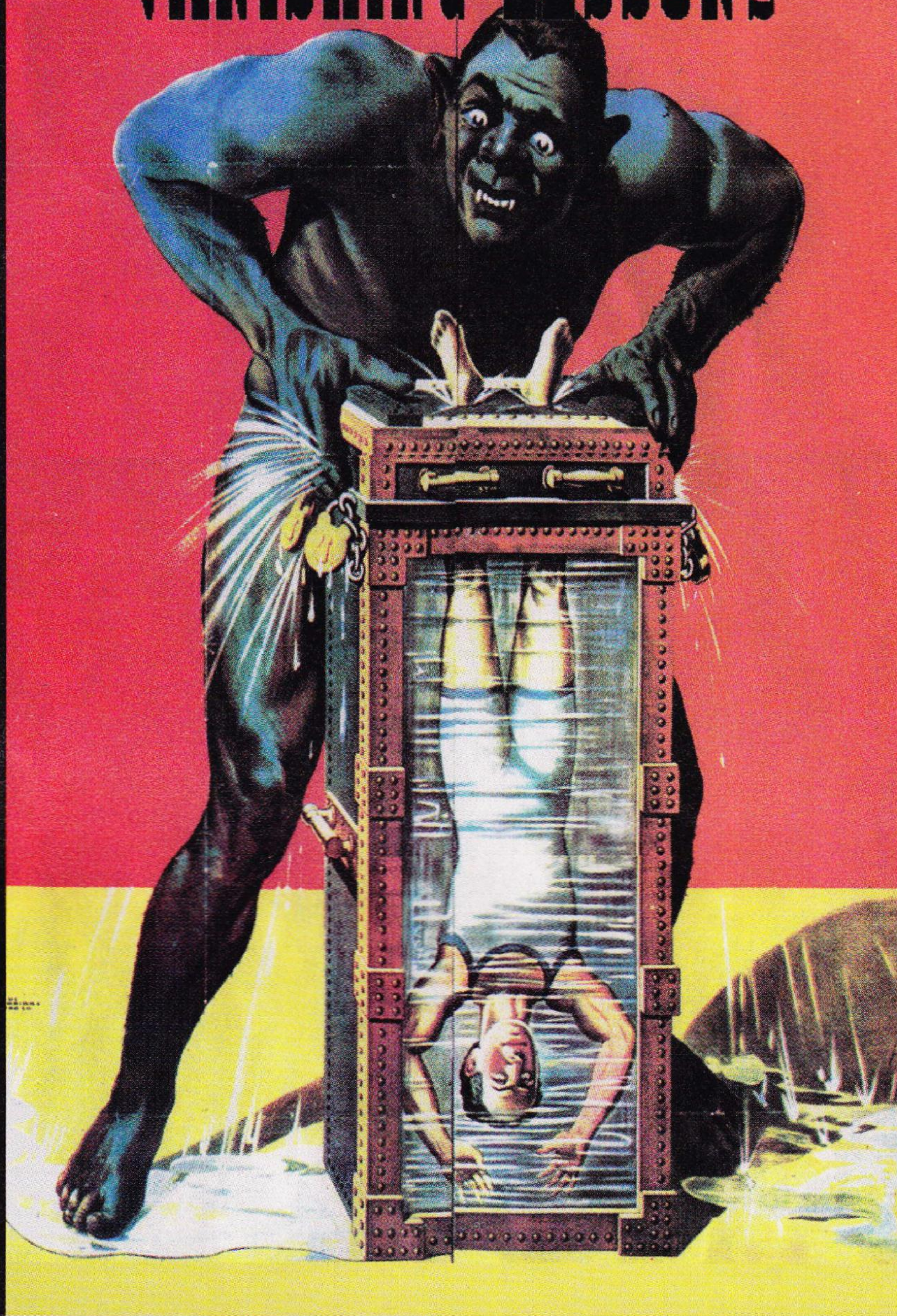


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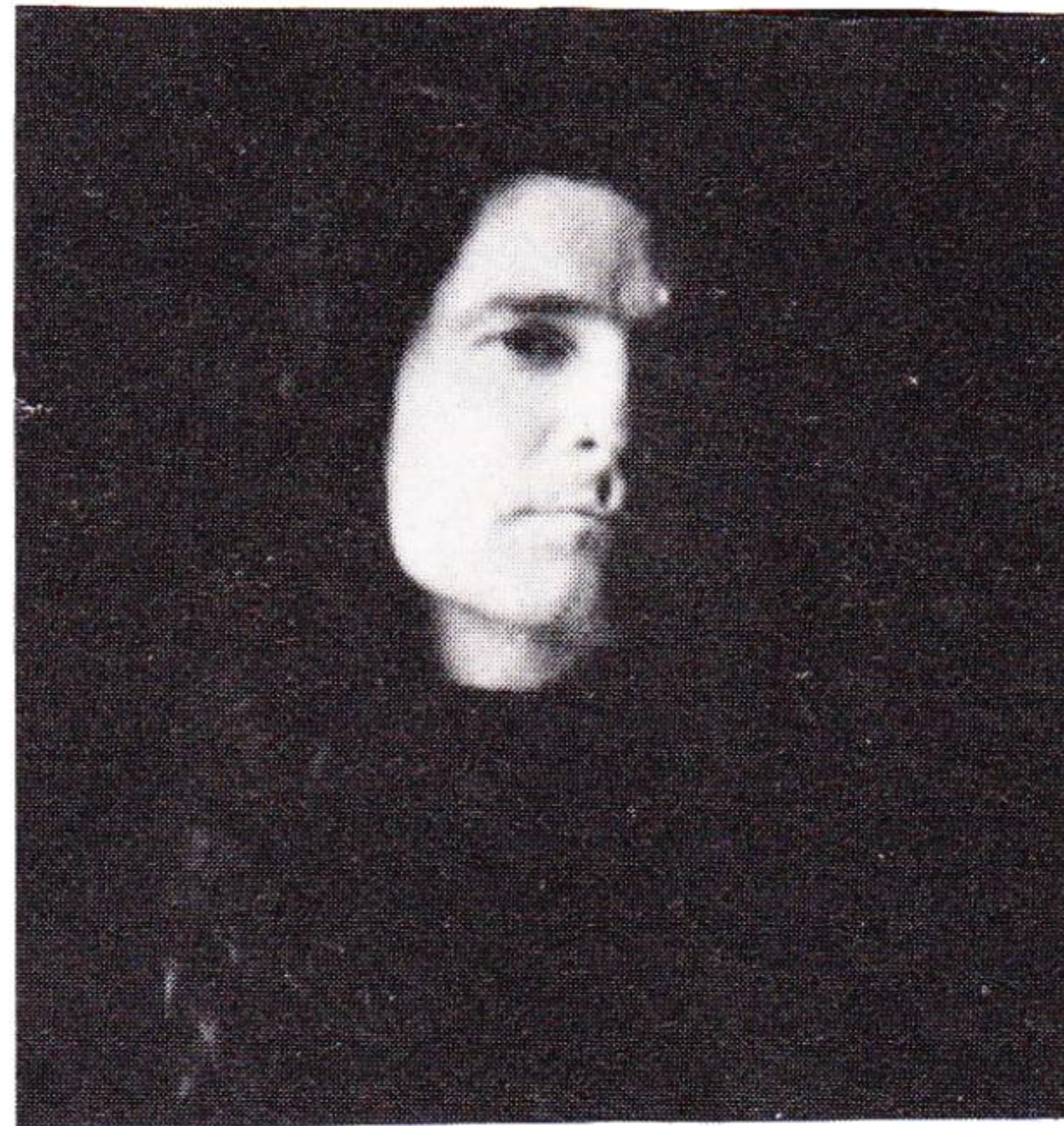
The Christian And Art *By Kemper Crabb*

The Sons Of Issachar: Knowing What Israel Should Do, Part III

In the last issue we continued to explore the implications of the example of the Sons of Issachar in I Chronicles 12:32, that of "knowing what Israel should do," and what that example might mean for Christian artists. (The other branch of the two-pronged example of the Issacharians was "understanding the times," which equates to the need to understand our historical and cultural situation, so that we can effectively engage and change that situation for Christ, which we considered in some detail in past columns.) Knowing what Israel should do translates into the necessity of knowing Scripture as the Divine Blueprint for what we are to believe and do as individuals and members of Christ's Church.

In my last column, we looked at two main reasons that have kept today's Church from truly knowing Scripture (e.g., laziness and content - rejecting doctrine), and in the column before that saw that we must view all things through the Lens of the Bible in order to gauge the worth of these things, so that we can know how to proceed in moving our culture toward obedience to Christ. This is why Christian artists (like all Christians) must know God's Word as to both Its Content and Form, for both of these aspects of the Bible have important repercussions for Christian artistry. This issue, we will begin to look at the need to know Scripture's Content (since the Bible's Forms cannot be easily assessed except in light of Its Content), looking at Biblical Forms (God willing) in issues to come.

In many circles of the Church today, theology is considered to be a bad word. We are told by those who frequent these circles that theology is bad, because it is much concerned with doctrine, which is thought to be only divisive, leading to argument and alienation between Christians who reach different conclusions about various parts of the Bible mean. Therefore, those in these circles teach, we should not involve ourselves with either theology or doctrine itself, since these things are held to take our focus off of Jesus Himself and our relationship with Him. It is not unusual for those who believe this to adopt the slogan: "No creed but Christ; no law but love." Is this view valid (or even honest)?



It's easy to see why people would adopt this belief (which is, humorously enough, a set of doctrines). History is replete with doctrinal disputes between Christians which have been badly handled and which ended disastrously (generally because those involved in the disputes forgot to heed the Biblical doctrines of humility and love for the brethren,

sadly enough). However, theology has contributed almost immeasurably more to the growth of the Kingdom than it has detracted from that growth. How so? Because of what theology and doctrine are, and what their function is.

Theology means "Knowledge of (or about) God;" it is a system of interlocking doctrines about God and His Purposes that attempts to be consistent with Scripture. A doctrine is simply a belief or teaching about something the Bible says. Every person who is a Christian holds doctrines, since Christianity is defined by a set of beliefs the Bible teaches, and that Christians hold, about Christ Jesus: Who He is, what He has done, etc.

Paul the Apostle thought doctrine was very important: he commanded that sound doctrine be taught by Church leaders (Titus 1:9; 2:1), that sound doctrine conforms to the Bible and was taught by the Bible (I Timothy 1:9-11; II Timothy 3:16); he taught that we and those who hear it would be saved by heeding sound doctrine (I Timothy 4:13-16), and that we should follow his doctrine-teaching example, which he learned from Christ (I Corinthians 11:1). Paul obviously had no problem with sound doctrine (though he was death on unBiblical doctrine. I Timothy 1:3-4; 6:3-5). Christians are supposed to live by Biblical doctrine.

Theology is just an organization of doctrines that allows us to see how doctrines fit together in Scripture, so that we can more easily understand God in His Nature and in His Relationship with us and the world (and, of course, what He wants us to do in His world). Theology was largely responsible for the making of the Western world into a Christian civilization; as Biblical theology progressively loses its hold on our society today, our culture becomes increasingly anti-Christian.

In light of this, let us look at the slogan of today's anti-theologians. "No creed but Christ" seeks to drive a wedge between Jesus and creedal teaching, but all Christian

creeds are only mini-theologies summing up the central Biblical doctrines about God and His Salvation (the primary creeds being the Nicene, Apostle's, Chalcedonian, and Athanasian creeds, all based on creeds in Scripture such as the one in I Timothy 3:16, and all of which sum up the essence of the Faith that all Christians hold common, which C.S. Lewis called "mere Christianity"). Jesus cannot be known apart from the Revelation by the Spirit of the Biblical doctrine about Him. To seek to separate Him from His Own Teaching about Himself is suicidal.

They also say, "no law but love," and in this we see the practical need for theology even more clearly. How do we know what love is? By what the Bible defines it as. What does Jesus say is the distinguishing mark of love for Him? "If you love Me," He says, "keep My commandments" (John 14:15, 23-24; 15:10). How do we know His Commandments? They are written in His Word, of course. But there are many of them, especially when you consider that all Scripture is His Word and contains His Commands, both New and Old Testaments (II Timothy 3:16-17). To relate those many Commands (some of which seem at first sight to contradict each other, though they don't really do so) to each other, and to set those Commands in their proper context, both in their background and in their relation to Christ and His Purposes, is the function of theology. To love Christ we must keep His Laws, and this requires an organized theological approach, to do so effectively.

All Christians, because they believe doctrines, have some kind of theology, even if it is only a basic, poorly developed, and inconsistent one. We are all responsible to develop our theologies so that they are increasingly consistent with the Bible. This is not easy, requiring us to study the Bible (not just have a little devotional three minutes a day, or just listen on Sundays at church, though these things are also important), learning well what it says across the whole Book, how it relates part to part, working to remember these parts, paying serious attention to those whose gift is teaching, working to advance our knowledge of Scripture and how the Bible relates to all the areas of life (such as art...).

This is important to us as artists, because theological doctrines directly affect the content and form of our art. Indeed, theology is (or should be) the ocean that we, as Christian artists, swim in. We will begin next issue (Christ willing) to examine how doctrine informs our artistic endeavors, as we seek to "know what Israel should do" in our day and time. **HM**

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Dave makes a promise to his fans that he will never, ever allow any record label to muffle his lyrics and "water-down" his powerful messages just to be more accepted and sell more music products! (Gal. 1:10)(Jer. chapter 23) Satan relies on the muted message of the church! In 1979, David was 15 and fired up for Jesus. He was writing and performing Christian metal before ever hearing about any kind of Christian metal music and he has live videos to prove it, but the churches he had trusted growing up never had the guts to teach him the spiritual principles needed for day to day victory in life! So his lack of knowledge almost killed him as he kept dabbling in sin. (Ho. 4:6) BUT NOW...

David has been totally delivered from drugs, alcohol, Satanic bands, fornication, correctional institutions, 8 years homelessness, poverty, sickness, and the "outlaw biker" lifestyle through his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ The Redeemer! (He now financially supports 40 ministries.)

This anointed, multi-talented "super-musician" draws the attention of people in all walks of life because of the strategic presentation of his "IN-YOUR-FACE" talents and testimony combined with the widely publicized "fire-works" between he and his earthly father over the abortion issue. (A book and a movie about David's life are already in the works) All of this attention gives David the perfect opportunity to mention details from books (apologetics) that prove that the Bible is the absolute highest form of reality in the universe (also how and why to find the best "Word-teaching" church in your area). These audio and video tapes include: 1) 3 vital prayers (printed on tape jackets & spoken on the tapes several times) a) The Salvation prayer! b) Prayer to receive the Infilling of the Holy Spirit! c) The prayer for physical healing! 2) List of the most vital books in David's personal library including concise apologetics, awesome books on how to be extremely thorough when activating God's power (in your health, finances, spiritual growth, etc...) and reference books. 3) David's dramatic testimony! 4) List of David's visions of mass evangelism and how God called him to witness to today's biggest secular rock stars! 5) Live concert footage! 6) Lots of beautiful Harley-Davidson motorcycles! 7) Many of the tunes that his fans love plus 2 new songs never before available! 8) David also is the owner/operator of "Eastern Guitar Institute" and has included 10 of his favorite speed soloing licks & tricks that are scattered throughout the video and explains how to properly execute each one! To order several copies for your lukewarm or unbelieving acquaintances send \$10 (+\$2 shipping) for each audio tape, and \$30 (+\$3 shipping) for each video to: DAVID A. WALKER, P.O. BOX 25191, WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. 27114 (audio 78 mins., video 114 mins.)* Great for youth meetings! Musicians: David is 30, single, financially prosperous, and looking for the most awesome spirit-filled musicians alive to form the ultimate "Dream-Team" band. So if you have a stable mind, aggressive stage presence, and the longest hair in your entire state, send your promo package now! (New Fans, put Dave on your prayer list please. God Bless) Thanks for all your past letters and support! They help a lot! (We even like mean notes)

* Those who order both the audio and the video will receive a free one year membership to the Fan Club with 81-monthly newsletters from David's ministry and access to cool posters, photos, Christian biker t-shirts, and more... Foreign orders add an extra \$3 shipping per item.

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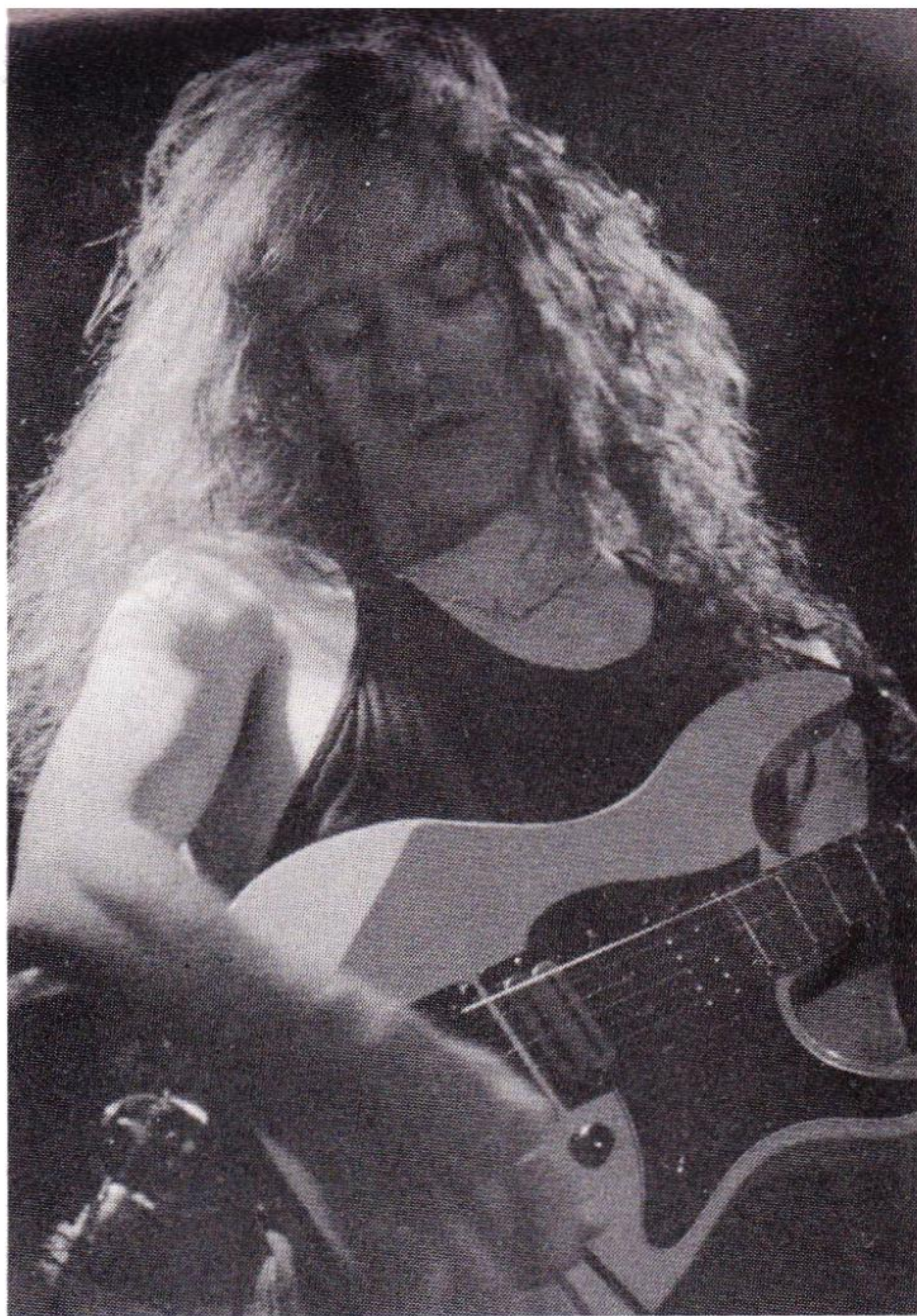


Photo - Curtis Richardson

First, I want to thank everyone who has written about my instructional book. The response has been tremendous! I'm proud to say that, during the next year, we'll be releasing several instructional books and videos by myself and other top Christian artists. This will not only give long-needed recognition to some of the top players, but will also provide anyone wanting to

Licks & Tricks by Jeff Scheetz

learn or improve an alternate way to study.

I get a lot of questions about how to develop "hand strength." This is kind of a tricky subject. Although there is a certain degree of strength involved in guitar playing, it is not your ordinary "tough guy" kind of strength. Guitar playing is much more dexterity and accurate placement of fingers than it is brute strength. Most of the strength you'll need for guitar playing will actually be developed as you play.

One of my favorites is when a guitarist tells me that they have "really been working on this guitar stuff." They then let me know that they squeezed their super poly-rubber monster hand grip flexerciser for a "whole hour yesterday." I always ask them how much time they spent playing their guitar. I usually get a response like, "Well, I had a lot to do when I got home, so I only played for about 15 minutes."

If you feel your strength isn't where it should be and squeezing a hand exerciser will help, then you should squeeze away. But, do it in the car or somewhere when you have time but can't physically play your guitar. If you are around your guitar, you should be playing it. Squeezing a hand grip is not going to make you a better guitarist. Sorry.

To work on your dexterity away from your guitar, try placing your hand on the table; or, better yet, holding a book or something to simulate your fingers on the fingerboard. Then, lift your fingers up and down using different finger combinations. (ie. 1, 3, 1, 3 or 1, 4, 2, 3, etc.) This will prove a good workout to develop the kind of strength you need, as well as helping you with control.

So, that's it. There's no "quick fix." All the hand exercising and gear buying, and spandex wearing (or flannel shirt wearing!) you can do won't make you a better guitarist. Playing guitar will.

When you think about it, it is a lot like a person who thinks they are being a good Christian just because they go to church on Sunday morning and Wednesday night, wear a t-shirt that says "God Rules" on it, and haven't actually killed anyone! They forgot to work on the most important part, which is their personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

It is easy to get caught up in the stuff around the edges and lose focus on the real thing. The bottom line is: feel free to use the hand gripper and wear the "God Rules" t-shirt, but don't forget what you ultimately are after!

See ya!

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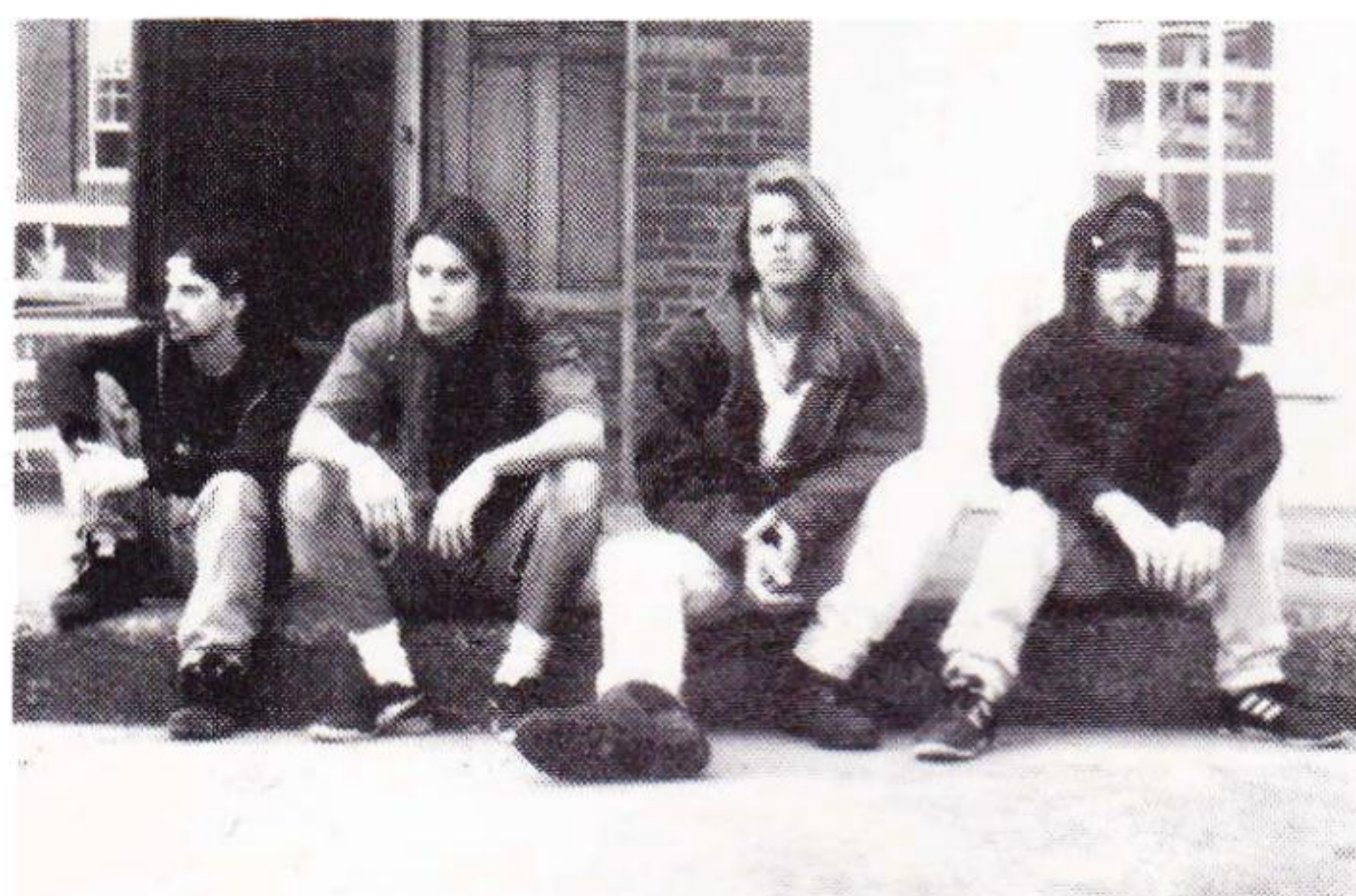
Proverbs 1:7

The fear of the lord is the
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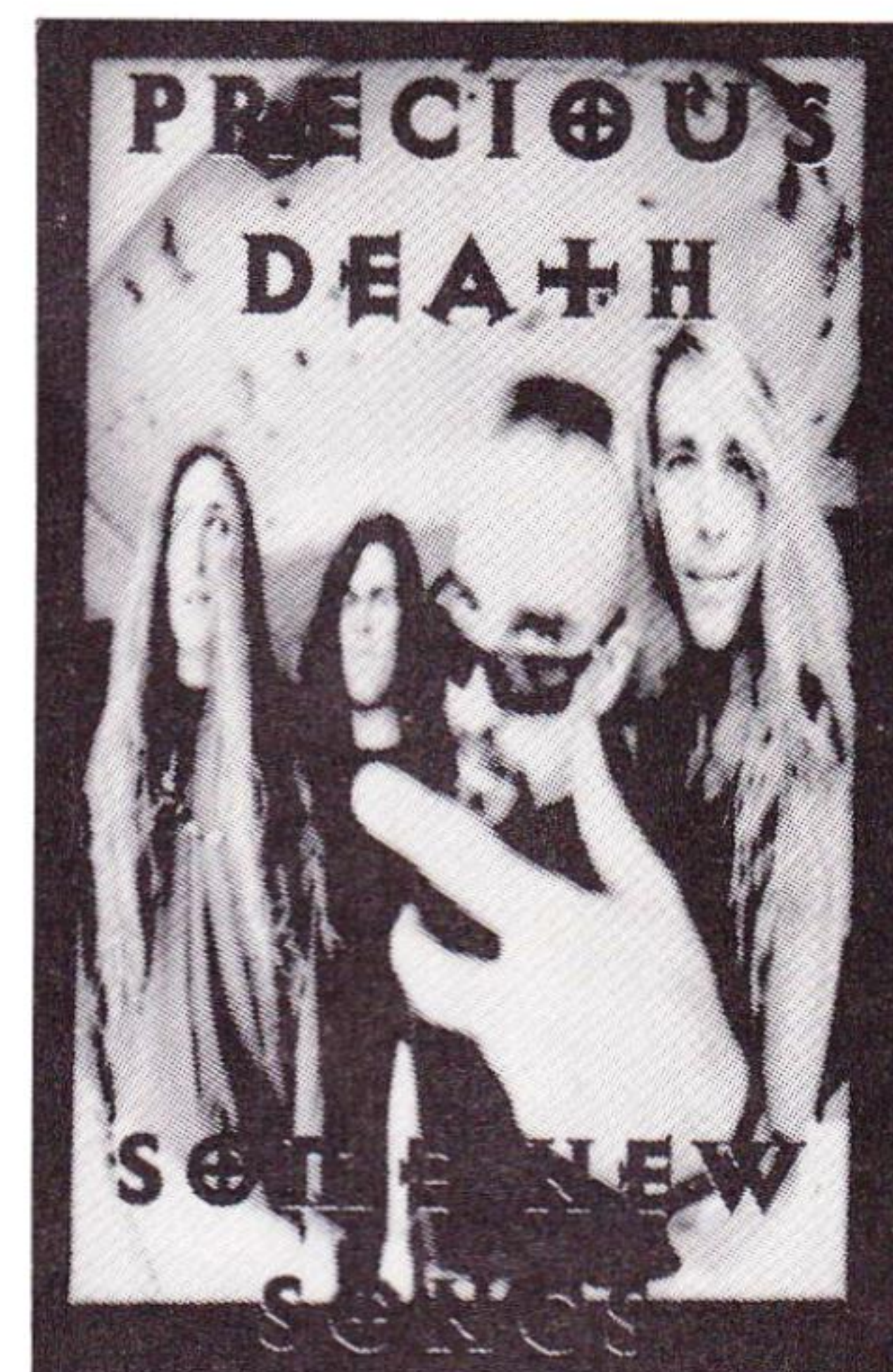
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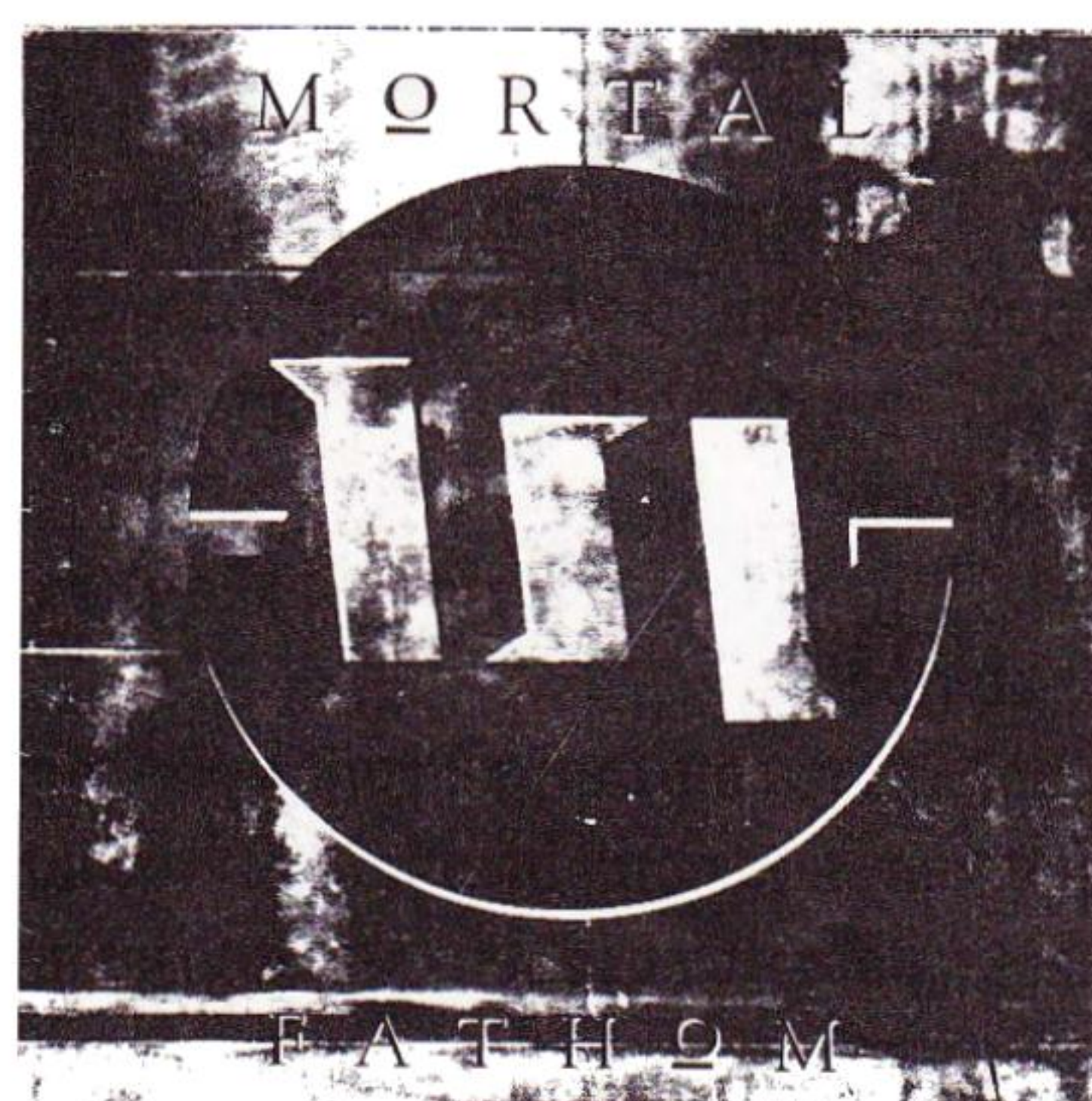
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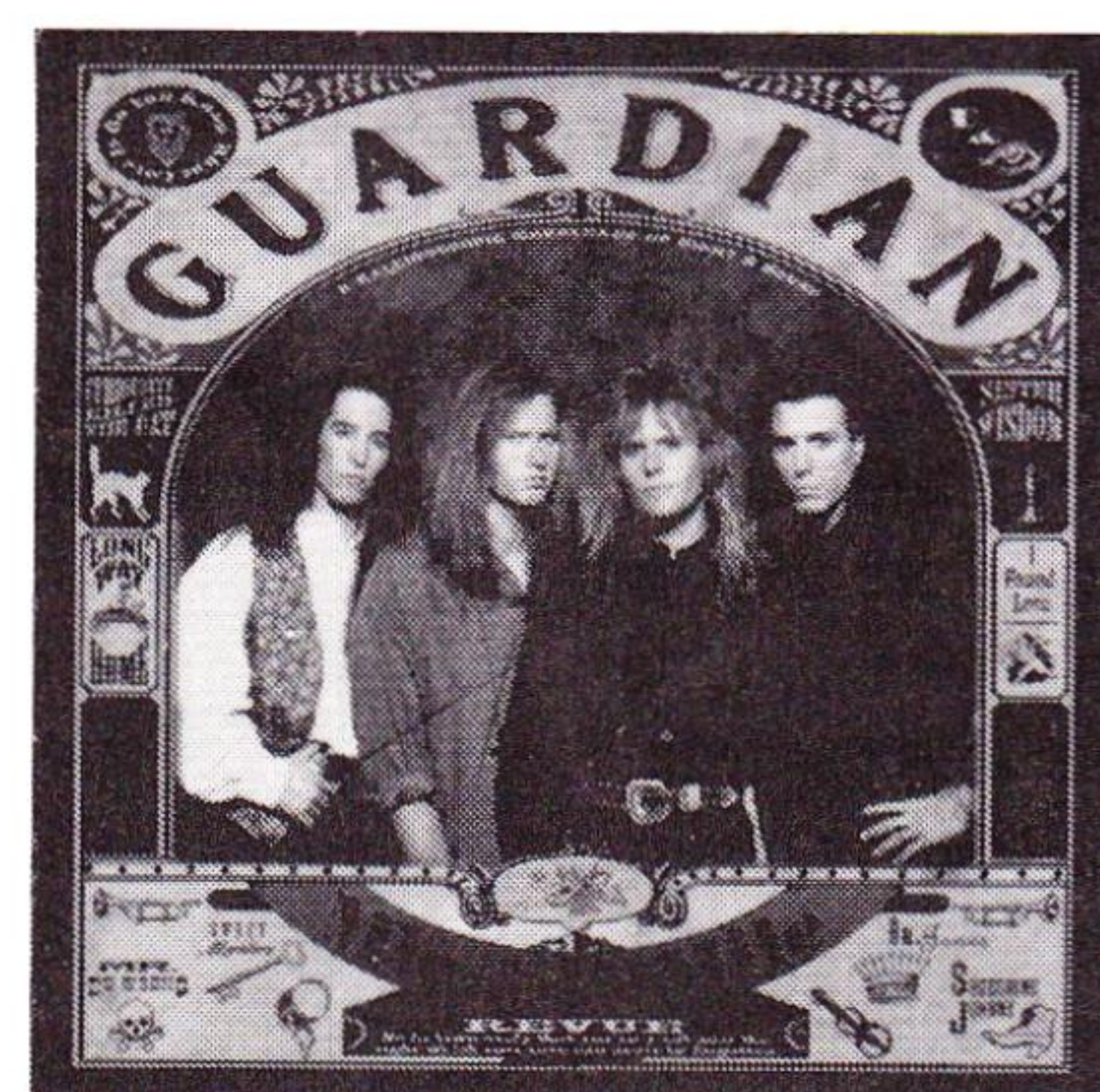
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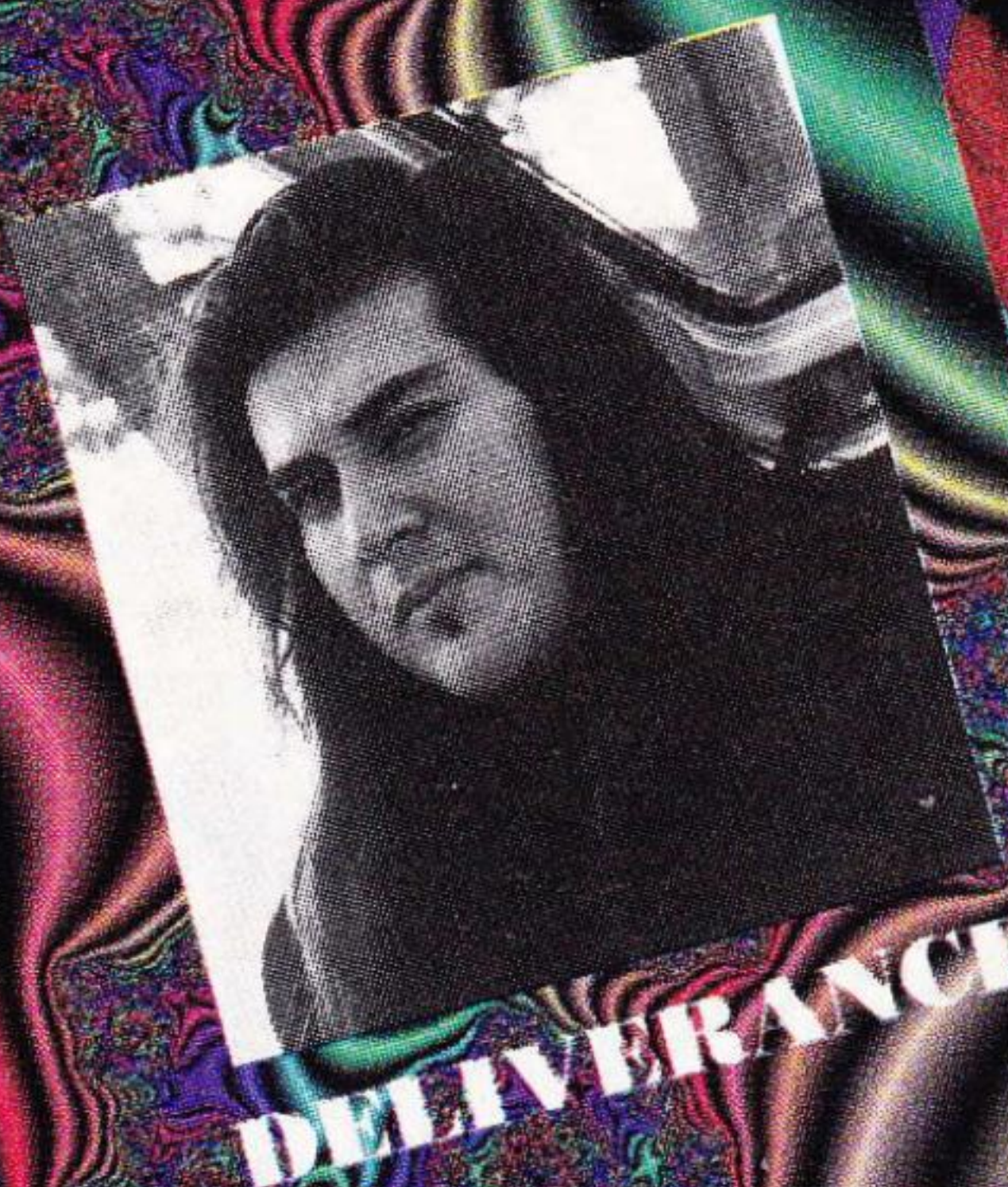
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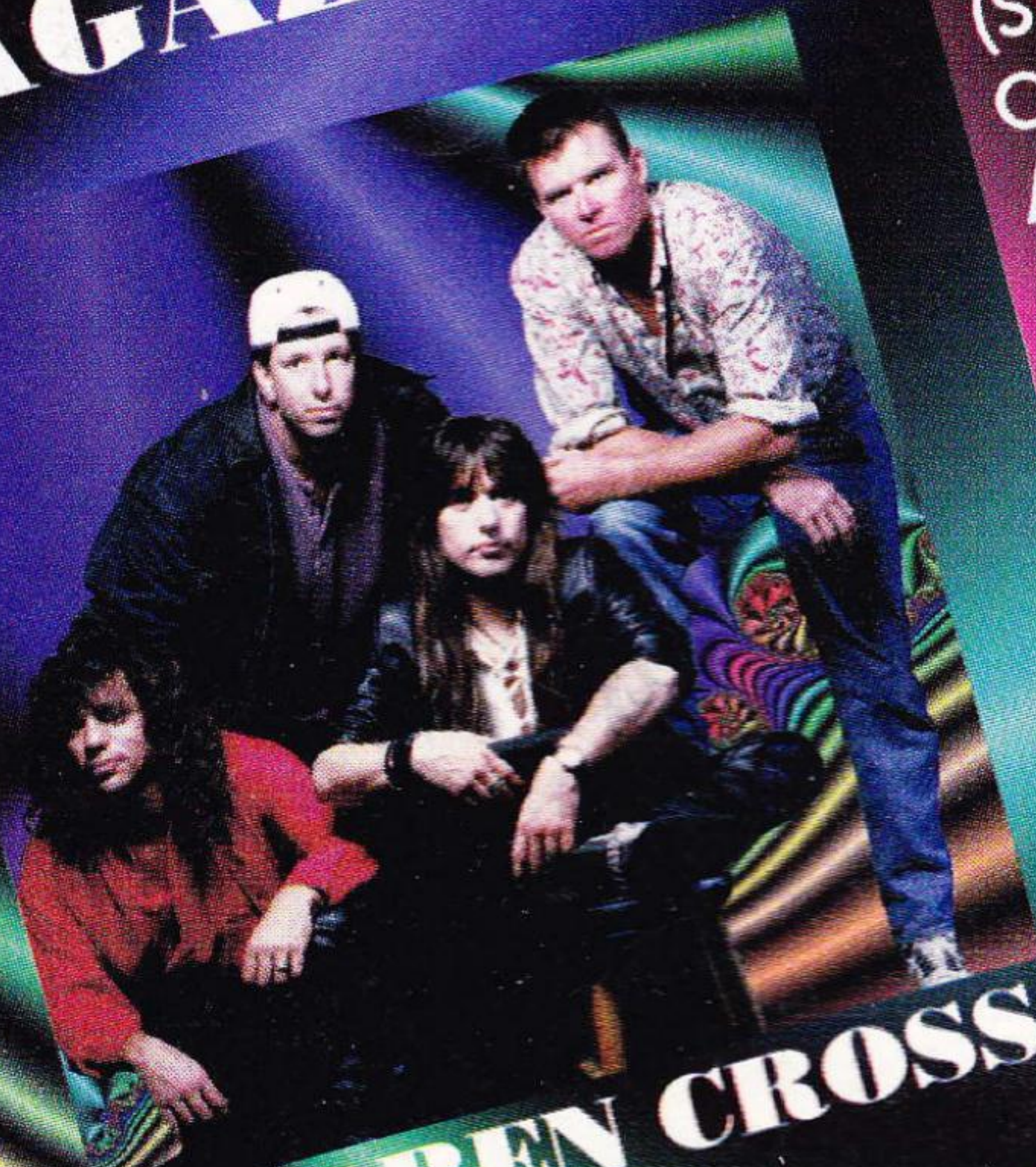
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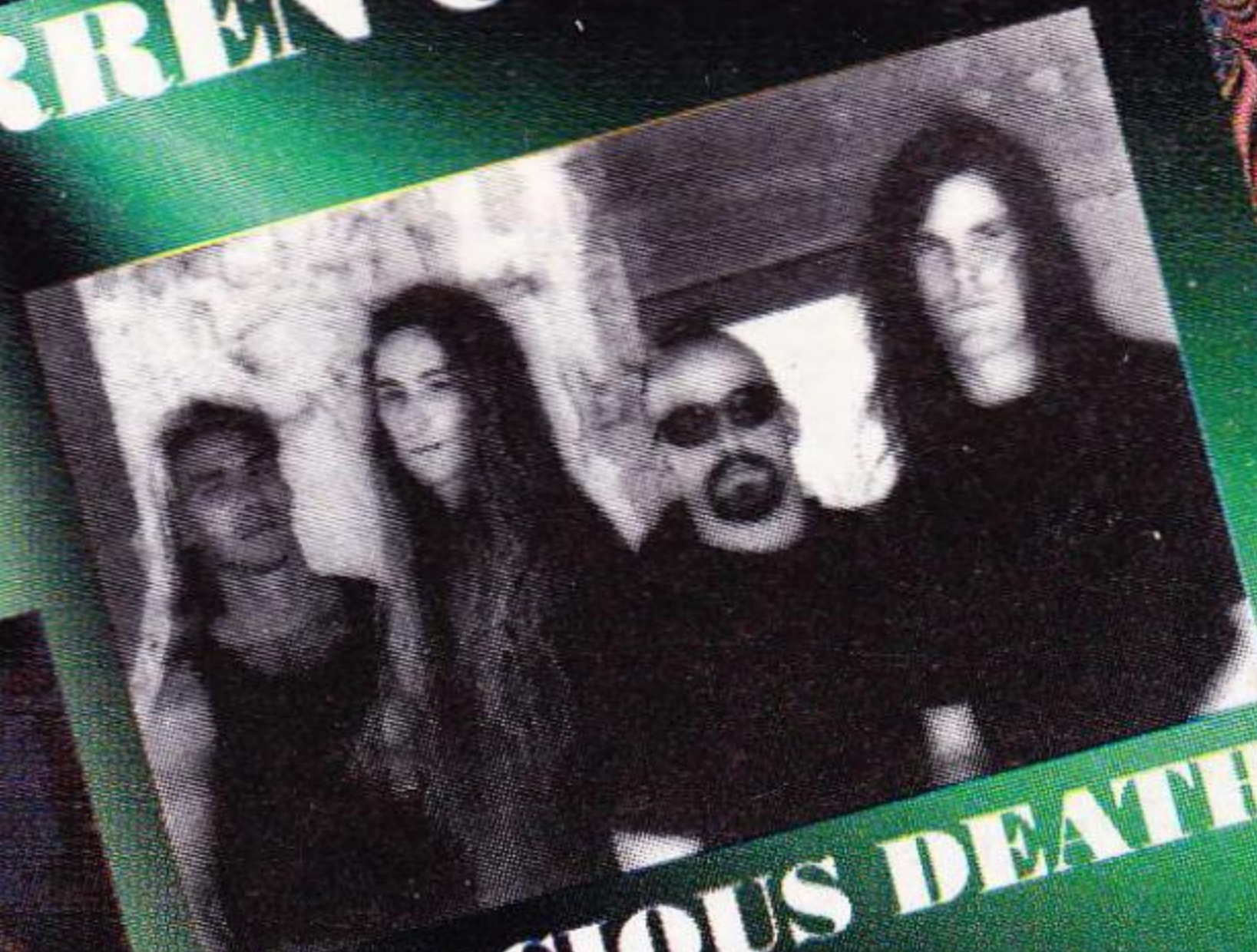
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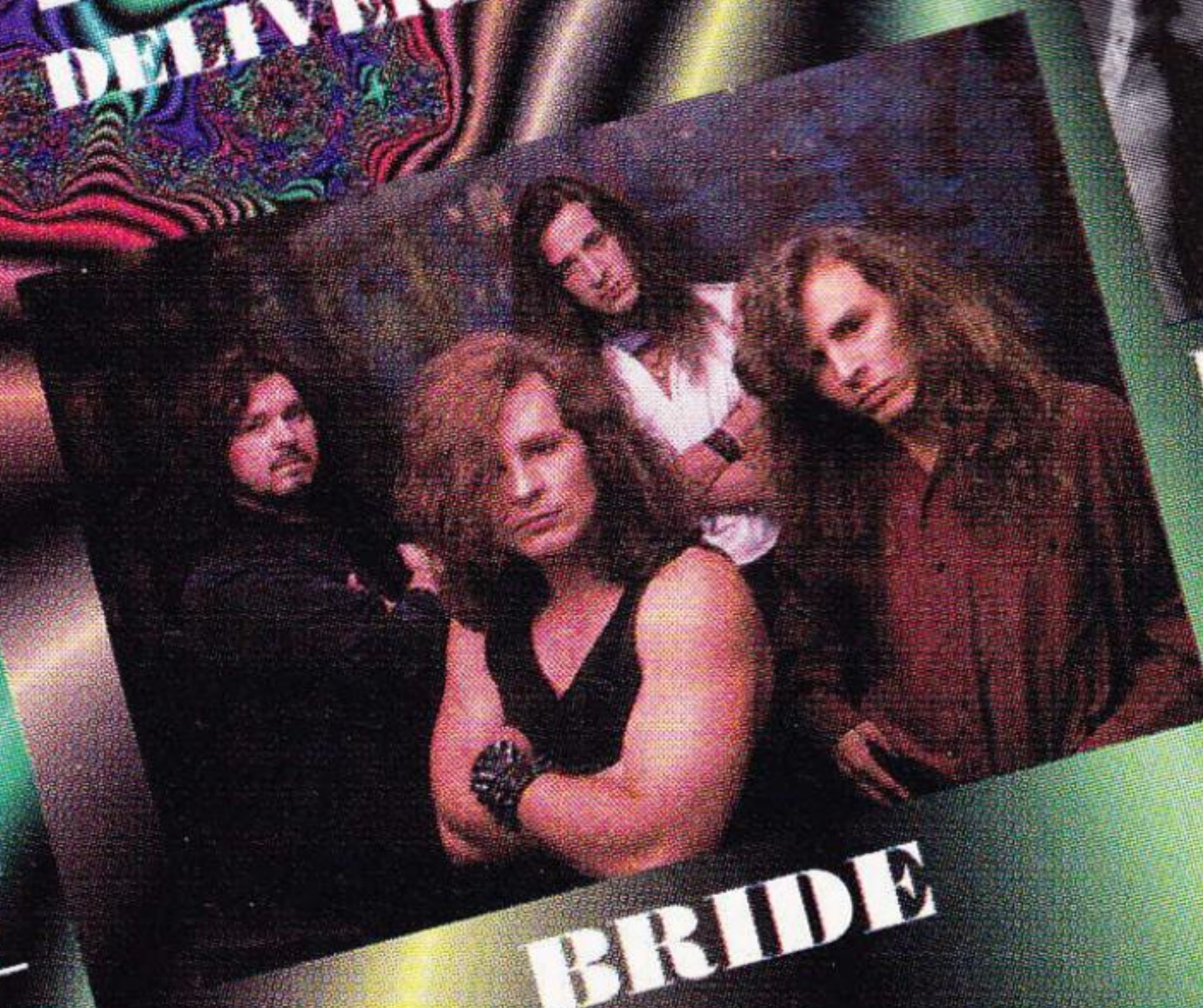
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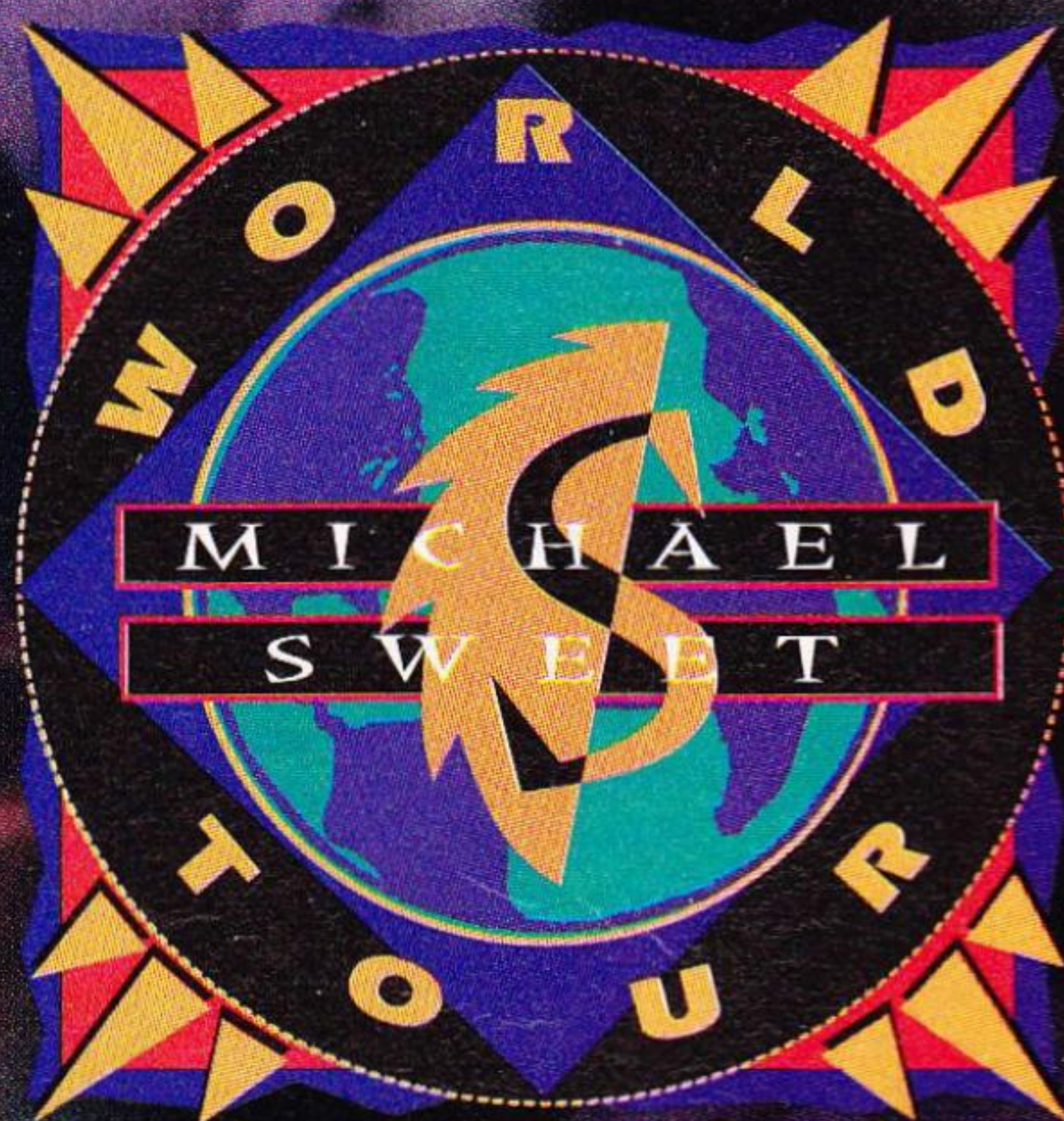
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9/30 Reno, NV
10/1 Santa Clara, CA
10/2 Visalia, CA
10/4 Las Vegas, NV
10/6 San Diego, CA
10/7 Valencia, CA

10/8 Phoenix, AZ
10/9 Albuquerque, NM
10/11 San Antonio, TX
10/13 Tulsa, OK
10/14 Arlington, TX
10/15 Oklahoma City, OK
10/16 Houston, TX
10/18 Knoxville, TN
10/20 Holland, MI
10/21 Cincinnati, OH
10/22 Indianapolis, IN
10/23 Detroit, MI

10/25 Louisville, KY
10/27 St. Louis, MO
10/28 Wichita, KS
10/29 Springfield, MO
10/30 Kansas City, MO
NOVEMBER
11/1 Waterloo, IA
11/3 Columbus, OH
11/4 Akron, OH
11/5 Greenville, OH
11/6 Washington, DC
11/8 Memphis, TN

11/10 Omaha, NE
11/11 Minneapolis, MN
11/12 Chicago, IL
11/13 Nashville, TN
11/15 Birmingham, AL
11/17 Atlanta, GA
11/18 Greenville, SC
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11/23 Boston, MA

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Photo by Sandra Mayurnik

"I hate you, God! You're nothing but a farce!" Tom's words rang out into the night. He looked down into his arms to see the lifeless body of his girlfriend.

Just moments before, they were on their way to a Bible study. Tom was in love. He and Julie had planned to get married after they finished school. They spent long hours talking about the family they would have one day – and how they wanted to make sure that God was the center of their home. It had all seemed so perfect.

As they were driving along, a car came out of nowhere. Tom tried to stop, but it was too late. The oncoming car hit the passenger door – right where Julie was sitting. As Tom dragged her out of the car, he could see that she was still breathing, even though she was not conscious. As the driver of the other car came stumbling over, Tom could tell that he was very drunk. But his attention was on Julie. Tom could see that she was hurt very badly.

He began to pray, "Lord, I know You love me and You love Julie. We have both been faithful to follow You, even when our friends persecute us. I know Your Word – and it tells us that You are a God of healing. I ask You right now to heal Julie. Lord, You know how much I love her, and how much she loves You! Please, Lord, touch her and heal her. Please!"

As Tom finished praying, he felt peace. He began to smile. "God is answering my prayers," he thought. He heard Julie begin to breathe a little stronger. A shimmer of hope shot through his heart. As he held Julie close to himself, she stopped breathing.

You know, it all seems so simple on tv. These high-powered "men of God" who heal everyone who comes to the altar. Sometimes, all they have to do is blow on them! Blam! Pow! Zowie! And they're healed! But what seems to

work well on tv doesn't always work in real life! At least not the kind of real life I live in! And I know I'm not alone! When Reader's Digest Magazine asked pastors what questions people asked most often, number one on the list was, **"Why do some prayers go unanswered?"**

Is a lack of faith the reason God doesn't answer my prayers? If so, that would have been a very cruel punishment for Tom, as he holds his dead girlfriend. Can you imagine God saying, "Now, Tom, you know your faith is weak. If it were a little stronger, I would revive Julie. But, since your faith is weak, I have decided to let her die." That is not the God of the Bible. In Matthew 7:7-11, it says:

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks the door will be opened. Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in Heaven give good gifts to those who ask Him!"

We believe in prayer. We practice prayer. We know God loves us. But it seems that many of our prayers are still not answered! Let me suggest a couple reasons:

1. **A limited view of prayer**

We need to understand that we are thinking of only one kind of prayer – the prayer of petition – when we say that our prayers have not been answered! Petition is only one form of prayer. There are prayers of confession, intercession, submission, praise, etc. Remember that prayer is communicating what is in your heart to God.

2. **A limited expectation from prayer**

Many times, we decide beforehand how God is going to answer our prayer. If the prayer is not answered in exactly that way, we say that God hasn't answered at all! God is a little bigger than that! He is not obligated to answer our prayers in the way we have determined! Here are a few examples from the Bible:

* Moses prayed that God would allow him to enter the promised land, and he died before he got there.

* The prophet Habakkuk began his book with the cry, "O Lord, how long shall I cry and you will not hear me?"

* Paul prayed three times for God to take away the thorn in his flesh, which was hindering his missionary work; but, for the rest of his life, he endured it and made the best of it!

How should we understand these examples? Was God listening to them?

We need to think about what we expect God to do! We expect Him to answer our prayers "Yes," when His answer is sometimes, "No." We need the faith to joyfully accept either answer!

Even though prayer is a very personal thing from your heart to God's, there are many things that all our prayers should have in common. First, we should pray with persistence. Ask God to show you what to pray for. D.L. Moody said that in all his life as a Christian, God never let a prayer go unanswered. Allow God to show you what to be persistent in.

Jesus taught us to pray with assurance. When we pray with assurance, we can pray with persistence. Then we begin to have a non-discouraging life of prayer. Jesus expressed that we should pray with persistence with three words: ask, seek, knock...

Ask! When we ask God, it means that we see our needs and are willing to make contact with God. We know we have a need that God can meet!

Seek! It shows that we are willing to make an effort on our part, along with the request to God. We can pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," but we must still work!

Knock! This shows the persistence we bring to prayer. Does it mean that we bug God with our knocking until he finally opens the door? No, but it shows Him we are serious in our persistence!

Then, we need to pray with patience. Prayers are answered in three ways: **Yes, No, and Wait.**

Next, pray personally. Remember that our prayers are addressed to our Heavenly Father, Who desires to be very close and personal to each one of us!

Are your prayers really unanswered? Never! Paul prayed for the removal of the thorn from his flesh, but found that God's grace was sufficient for every need! His faith and his whole ministry was stronger as a result! When Jesus prayed that the cup might pass, He had to drink it. He faced Pilate and the cross, but we have salvation and eternal life because of it!

God loves you, and you can trust Him to always act in your best interests. He sees the whole picture – you don't. Trust Him. Remember, Father knows best!

On a side note, many of you have been asking about our Bible school program, called "Intense Studies." We are, as you know, now located in Nashville. The classes will be held there. If you are interested in attending classes, or would like any other information, write to me!

"Pastor Bob's Column," Sanctuary International, PO Box 23945, Nashville, TN 37202-3945

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WATCH WHAT YOU ARE SAYING!

"I'm mad at the church! The church brings me down! The church is full of hypocrites! The church is also behind the times! The church doesn't live in reality!"

I've heard these kind of statements before, and, even though the person complaining to me may have had a legitimate gripe about a fellow believer, I've felt uneasy about agreeing with them.

Sometimes a believer in Christ can act like they don't know the first thing about love and can really hurt another person. Of course, this is obvious, because we've all seen someone (ourselves maybe?) act out of character or respond in anger or fail in some way. When we're on the receiving end of this kind of treatment, it can hurt.

There's a lot of disenfranchised young people, who feel hurt and alienated by what they refer to as "the church." Many, if not all, of these people were let down, betrayed, or even stabbed in the back by a fellow Christian. Now they are cynical and distrusting of an entity they call "the church."

There's two major problems here: One, there's been some offense between two parties (both of which may be at fault) and there needs to be some (true and lasting) peace made between them. Two, whenever a bummed out Christian criticizes "the church," they are criticizing themselves too! Pretty stupid, huh?



"The church" is the Biblical name for all those who have come to put their faith in Jesus Christ. (That means you and those other Christians that you're mad at are all part of the church.) Jesus declared that He is the builder of the church (Matthew 16:18). The bible says that the church is the bride, the wife of the lamb (Revelation 21:9). Christ loves the church as His bride (Ephesians 5:25).

God told prophet Hosea to marry a prostitute. The book of Hosea explains that God did this to show his undying love for His bride, His people, His church — even though she is unfaithful to Him.

Even though some members of the church have been unfaithful to God and to you, God still loves His church. Don't you go badmouthing the bride of Christ, or you might find yourself face to face with an angry husband!

God used some very strong language to describe His relationship with His people. The love between a husband and a wife is intense. As a man protects his wife, so Christ protects the church.

Imagine yourself stepping into a bar... Okay, let's say you're ordering a root beer! The waitress who serves you your drink is rude to you, so you start complaining to the guy next to you about

how rude and inconsiderate that waitress was. "What a jerk! She had no right to treat me the way she did!" All of a sudden, this guy turns to you and scowls, "That waitress is my wife!" Then he picks you up by the collar and cocks his fist back to knock your lights out with one punch...

Kinda scary, huh? You happened to say the wrong things, to the wrong guy, at the wrong time! Now, imagine how the Lord Jesus Christ might feel about your criticism of a part of His church...